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LECTURES ON THE SHORTER CATECHISM OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OE DIVINES—ADDRESSED TO YOUTH.

LECTURE IV.

(*Concluded from p.* 439.)

Let us now, very briefly, consider the *external* evidence that the scriptures contain a divine revelation. Among the numerous sources of this kind of evidence, I have time to mention only two of the chief—miracles and prophecy:—If, indeed, there be any just ground for a distinction between these two kinds of proof.

A miracle has been defined "an effect contrary to the established constitution and course of things, or a sensible deviation from the known laws of nature." That a miracle should ever be wrought for a trivial purpose, is certainly contrary to all our ideas of fitness—to all our perceptions of the wisdom, regularity, order and stability, which we observe in the works of God. But that for a great and important purpose, there should be some deviation from the established laws and order which we observe in the works of creation and providence, is in no respect unworthy of the power, the wisdom, or the goodness of the great Author of nature. "Man (says Dr. Gleig) is unquestionably the principal creature in this world, and apparently the only one in it, who is capable of being made acquainted with the relation in which he stands to his Creator. We cannot, therefore, doubt, but that such of the laws of nature as extend not their operation beyond the limits of this earth, were established chiefly, if not solely, for the good of mankind; and if, in any particular circumstances, that good can be more effectually promoted by an occasional deviation from those laws, such a deviation may be reasonably expected." Now, when we consider, as already shown, how desirable, useful, and even necessary, a revelation is, to teach man the true knowledge of God and the method in which he may be restored to the favour and eternal fruition of his Creator, we cannot deem it unworthy of infinite wisdom and goodness, and therefore not unreasonable, that we should expect some occasional deviation from the established laws of nature, for this great and important purpose. And you will observe, that in whatever degree it is reasonable to expect that a revelation should be made to mankind, in that same degree it is reasonable to expect that miracles should be wrought —For without a miracle, the supernatural communication could not be verified to the world at large.

When any one affirms that he has a supernatural communication to make, we justly demand of him the evidence of this. And let it be remembered, that this is the doctrine of scripture, and the test to which, as I have heretofore intimated, all who profess to have received revelations ought, in all cases, to be brought.

If what they profess to teach were a mere matter of reason, we might judge of it by reason; or if a reliance were placed on argument, we would listen to the argument. But here is a communication to be made, of which reason is not, abstractly, the competent judge; and which demands regard, not from argument, but from divine authority. Show us, then, the authority by which your demand is sanctioned. This can be done, only by working an undeniable miracle. If this be done, but not otherwise, we submit to the demand. We submit, because we cannot believe that He alone who can control and change the laws of nature, would do it to confirm a falsehood; and by doing so, impose in the most grievous manner, on his rational creatures. Miracles, therefore, are essential to a revelation for the good of mankind at large; and when *really* wrought they give it a divine sanction.

That almost every kind of religion in the world has professed to have miracles connected with its pretensions, we admit. But mark a difference, which at once annihilates this objection, as it relates to the Jewish and Christian systems. Yes, although this objection has been so much dwelt on, yet it is an undeniable fact, that the Jewish and Christian systems are the *only ones* since the foundation of the world, that professed to take their ORIGIN from *miracles, wrought in the face of the world, and of which both friends and enemies might judge.* This is what those systems professed to do, and they succeeded in it; and this has never been attempted, with success, by any other religion of which the world has yet heard. No other religion, I repeat, has ever *begun* its career and professed to *rest* all its pretensions on *open undeniable miracles,* wrought in the presence of foes as well as friends, and succeeded in the attempt. Mahomet did not found his pretensions on miracles. He disclaimed this. He professed indeed to have divine communications; but they were all in *secret.* He avowed that his religion was to be propagated by the sword; and accordingly by the sword it was propagated.

Mr. Hume is the infidel writer of most note who has opposed the credibility of miracles. But he has been answered by Dr. Cambell, in a manner which seems to me to preclude all reply. The answer is the most satisfactory piece of controversy that I have ever read. Mr. Hume's bold position is, that *no testimony whatever* can warrant a belief in miracles, because miracles are a violation of the laws of nature; and all our experience, he says, tells us that the laws of nature are never violated, while the same experience tells us that human testimony is often false—therefore, it is more reasonable to believe that the testimony is false, than that miracles are true. This is certainly very specious, and yet it is perfectly deceptive. What does he mean by *experience?* Would he confine it to what he and those with whom he had conversed, had seen or observed for themselves? No—he was a historian himself, and would believe *well authenticated history.* History and written records, then, make a part of experience. And does all history say that miracles must be false? So far from it, that there is no better authenticated history on earth, than that which attests that miracles are true. The whole then, is a perfect sophism, built on the equivocal use of the word *experience.*

If miracles were frequently wrought, they would lose their effect and use; because they would then come to be considered in the light of the ordinary course of things. Had the sun never risen and set but once, it would probably have been regarded as the greatest miracle that was ever recorded. We cannot, therefore, look for miracles in every age. They were given to sanction God's revealed will, and that being done, they have had their use and have ceased.

Testimony can give us as *satisfac-*

tory, though not as *impressive* evidence of miracles, as if we had witnessed them ourselves. Miracles are just as easy to Almighty power, as the carrying on of the most ordinary operations of nature. If miracles, then, are wrought, in which those who witness them cannot be deceived, *testimony* may verify this fact to others, as fully as any other fact. All we want is *honest competent witnesses.* How do we know then that we have such witnesses, in regard to the miracles—let us say, of the New Testament? This is a proper and rational inquiry: and I answer it by taking a single miracle—which being authenticated, all the rest will be found to be connected with it. I take the resurrection of Christ from the dead. None deny that he was put to death on the cross. The Roman historians, the Jews, Christians, all attest and agree in this. His apostles affirm that he rose from the dead on the third day; that he ate, and drank, and repeatedly conversed with them, during forty days after his resurrection: that at one time he appeared to five hundred; and that at last, in the presence of his apostles, and in their open broad day view, he ascended into heaven. Here is a fact, in regard to which the apostles could not be deceived. They knew the Saviour perfectly; they had been his intimate companions for three years; they were not easily convinced that he was risen, although he had told them repeatedly that he would rise. One of them was very incredulous; but they were, at last, all convinced: so perfectly convinced, that they spent their lives in publishing this event, and the whole gospel system connected with it, to the world. They did this, and nothing could prevent or deter them from doing it; although they were hated, and despised, and persecuted, by almost the whole Jewish nation, for persisting in their testimony. They endured every indignity, every hardship, every loss and privation for doing it; yet they still persisted, and at last died martyrs to their testimony, sealing it with their blood. No falsehood ever was, or can be, thus attested. And we have four separate histories of this transaction, as well as of the whole life and other miracles of Christ, all agreeing in the same account: and we have not only as much, but far more evidence that those histories were written by the men whose names they bear, very shortly after the transactions recorded, than we have that Homer wrote the Iliad, Virgil the Eneid, or Livy and Tacitus the histories which bear their names. On this solid ground it is that we believe the miracles of the New Testament. It cannot be deceptive: no falsehood, I repeat, ever was, or ever can be, attested in this manner. Miracles, therefore, have been wrought, to confirm the doctrines and facts of the New Testament, as well as the Old. The God of truth has stamped these doctrines and facts with his own signet, and we rest on them without a reasonable doubt of their verity.

Prophecy we are next to consider. This, indeed, is a kind of miracle. For who, without the dictation of Him who sees the end from the beginning, can foretel, with certainty and particularity, events that shall take place hundreds of years after the time of the prediction; and this too when, at the time of prediction, nothing is more unlikely to happen than many of these events. But the Bible abounds with prophecies of this very character; prophecies, some of which have been fulfilled; some that are now fulfilling; and some which are yet to be accomplished.

When Egypt, and Assyria, and ancient Tyre, were in all their power and splendour, it was prophecied that they should be utterly blotted out—the former as nations, and the latter as a mart for commerce. These prophecies have been literally fulfilled. A still older prophecy—that which predicted that it should be the character of the descendants of Ishmael, that their "hand should be against every man, and every man's

hand against them," and yet that they should never be subdued—has been fulfilling for more than three thousand years, and is yet fulfilling. The Arabs boast, at this hour, of their descent from Abraham: they have always been, as they now are, depredators on all surrounding people; and yet, though frequently worsted and partially conquered, they have never been subdued.

Seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, Isaiah predicted his coming, and described his character. Read this prediction and description, in the 53d chapter of Isaiah, and you really seem to be reading a history of Christ, rather than a prophecy concerning him. Daniel, also, prophecied of the Messiah, by his very name; and marked the period of his advent so exactly, that it seems impossible to deny that it was Christ Jesus to whom he referred. That these prophecies were not written after the events to which we refer their fulfilment, there is the best of all evidence, in the fact that the Jews, who deny their fulfilment, have been the depositaries of the books which contain the predictions.

Our Lord, in the most remarkable and explicit manner, predicted the destruction of Jerusalem, and warned his disciples to flee from it; which all accounts testify that they did. Jerusalem was destroyed in the seventieth year of the Christian era; and before that time there is the best evidence that the whole evangelical history was published, except the gospel of John, in which this prediction is not found—probably because he had seen it fulfilled. But in this same prediction of our Lord, there is an intimation in regard to the Jews, which has been fulfilling from the destruction of their city and temple to the present time; and of which we can judge, in part, from our own observation. "Jerusalem, (said the Saviour) shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled." What a remarkable accomplishment has there been, of this declaration? Julian, the apostate Roman emperor, attempted to rebuild the city and temple of Jerusalem, that he might falsify this prediction. But although he entrusted the enterprise to one of his ablest generals, heaven blasted the attempt—Jerusalem is yet trodden down of the Gentiles, and the Jews are scattered over all the earth. Of this we are the living witnesses; after the lapse of nearly eighteen centuries, since the publication of the prophecy.

Farther—It is conclusively implied in our Lord's prediction, that when "the time of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled," the Jewish state shall be restored: and the Apostle Paul, in the eleventh chapter of his epistle to the Romans, shows at length that it is the purpose of God, when "the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in," that the Jews shall "be grafted into their own olive tree"—shall be restored to that church of the living God which was originally constituted among their progenitors, and from which, by their unbelief, they will so long have suffered an exclusion. This prophecy, although not as yet fulfilled, has been, from the time when it was uttered, and is at the present hour, in such a train of fulfilment, as to leave no reasonable doubt of its eventual and perfect accomplishment. The Jews have been preserved as a separate people, amidst all their dispersions and all their grievous persecutions. While other conquered, captured, and dispersed nations and tribes have, without a single exception, melted away, and at last been amalgamated with the mass of the population in which they have been mingled, the Jews are as much a distinct people now, as they were at the close of the Babylonish captivity. Is not this a presumption of the strongest kind, that they have been preserved by the special providence of God, for that restoration and that conversion to the Christian faith, which the scriptures assure us are yet to take place? In addition to all, consider how the feelings, of at least some Christian

nations, in regard to the Jews, have within a few years past begun to be changed, from that extreme hatred and abhorrence which had so long existed, to pity, and sympathy, and a degree of kindness; consider the lively interest which many Christians, both in Europe and America, are now taking in the amelioration of the condition of this long neglected and suffering people, and the efforts which are made and the prayers which are offered, for their conversion to the faith of Christ; consider that a number of remarkable conversions have actually taken place, and that a spirit of anxious inquiry, to a greater extent and degree than I believe has ever before existed, has been awakened among the Jews themselves, in relation to the truth of the New Testament, which has recently been translated into their sacred language, and pretty widely diffused among them—consider all this, and it seems to me that no unprejudiced mind can retain a serious doubt, either of the final accomplishment of the prophecy we consider, or that the time of its fulfilment is drawing nigh.

On the subject of prophecy I shall only further observe, that what is intimated in the predictions we have been considering, namely, that "the fulness of the Gentiles" shall be brought into the Christian church, is elsewhere explicitly and repeatedly foretold; and that the signs of the times in which we live seem to indicate the near approach of the millennial age—the age when the great adversary of souls "shall deceive the nations no more till a thousand years be fulfilled;" when "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters do the seas;" and "all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." More I think has been done for the spread of the gospel within the last thirty years, than had been done in the twelve preceding centuries: and it does seem to me that no one can take a just survey of the world at the present time, and not be convinced that the glorious days so long predicted and promised to the church, and the subject of her unceasing prayers and hopes, are even now beginning to dawn on the world.

Thus, my young friends, have I laid before you a brief and imperfect statement of a part of the abundant evidence we possess, that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are, indeed and in truth, the word of God. I shall close the lecture with three short but important advices, arising out of what you have now heard.

1. Never read infidel books to gratify curiosity, or as a matter of amusement. Curiosity and amusement are improper motives to have influence in so serious and sacred a concern as that which relates to the question, whether God has, or has not, spoken to us in the Bible: and if you are found to trifle with this subject, you will do it at an awful peril. Those who are called to defend our holy religion, whether among the clergy or the laity, must read and examine the writings in which that religion is attacked, in order to make its defence. But all unnecessary and voluntary familiarity with these publications, is certainly dangerous and injurious.—To those who are not prepared to answer the subtle objections of learned infidels, they may be fatally pernicious; and even to those who are well prepared to answer them, they may occasion much trouble and vexation. They may fill the mind with harassing thoughts, which although the reason and judgment are perfectly satisfied that they ought not to be indulged, and that the objections suggested have been most solidly and repeatedly answered, may, notwithstanding, still occur, and for a long time worry and torment, though they never produce a change of opinion, or have any effect on practice. Do not mistake me, my young friends—I am not advising you to a blind and implicit faith in the truth of revelation. If you have time, and inclination, and the means of doing it, and find it necessary to

your satisfaction or stability in religion, examine this whole subject thoroughly. Read with care, and seriousness, and candour, and prayer for light and direction, the ablest writers on both sides of the question; and at the same time read largely in the Bible itself. For the result of such a course I have no anxiety. I solemnly believe that it never yet ended in any other way than in a deep and settled conviction that our scriptures contain a revelation from God. It is not against *inquiry* that I advise and warn you, but against inquiry *unfairly conducted;* and against meddling with profane and blasphemous writings as *a matter of choice*, or without a sufficient reason for doing it. Against this, as pregnant with certain mischief, I do most seriously warn you; and I beseech you to remember the warning to the end of life.

2. Study the sacred scriptures continually, and become as accurate as you can in your knowledge of all that they contain. The advantages resulting from a correct and familiar knowledge of the contents of the sacred volume, are not easily enumerated. Such a knowledge has a far more extensive influence in enlightening the understanding, and in cherishing a just taste, and in giving us a right view of the human heart and character, than is commonly imagined. It puts us in possession of the only perfectly correct system of morals; and shows us the grounds of many of the laws and institutions of our country. It gives us a clear view of the infinite superiority of the religious system of the Bible to the systems of the most refined nations of heathen antiquity, teaches us wherein the true and acceptable worship of God consists, and qualifies us to hear sermons with advantage, and to judge rightly, not only of them but of all the other disquisitions on the subject of religion, whether written or spoken, which profess to be derived from them or sanctioned by them. Make use of all the assistances to which you have access, to improve your knowledge of the sacred scriptures; consult maps, plates, travels, geographical and historical discussions. Without some knowledge of the country, habits and manners, to which the sacred writers refer, they cannot be clearly and fully understood; and reading on these subjects is at once both pleasant and profitable. Oh, that it could take the place of that eager perusal of worthless, and worse than worthless publications, in which so many youth of both sexes, now consume so large a portion of their precious time! Do not neglect the aid of commentators; and yet do not take your religious system implicitly from any of them. Read and judge of the sacred scriptures for yourselves; always remembering that for yourselves you must answer to the Searcher of hearts, for the manner in which you receive and treat his revealed will.

3. Remember that there is a *saving knowledge* of the holy scriptures, which differs from all merely speculative knowledge, however profound or accurate. Memorable indeed is that petition in the last intercessory prayer of our blessed Saviour,—"Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." Your own observation may satisfy you, that there are many who are by no means ignorant of the proper import of much of the language of the sacred volume, who yet are not sanctified by the truths which it teaches and reveals. To produce this effect, the truth must be set home on the heart and conscience, by the operation of the same holy Spirit by whom the sacred scriptures were indited. Speaking of this office of the Holy Ghost, the Saviour himself says—"When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment—He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." The Saviour hath also said—"If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them

that ask him?" You cannot desire more encouragement than is here given you, to ask earnestly and perseveringly the influence and aid of that almighty Agent, by whom the truths which he hath revealed are made known, in their saving influence, to the souls of men—by whom the human mind is enlightened into "the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus," and formed to such a spiritual taste and love of the truth, and made to know such a sweet and powerful application of it, as to render the language of the Psalmist the most expressive of the views and feelings which it produces, of any that can be devised.—"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether; more to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward—The entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple—Oh how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." When you once experience this blessed effect of the divine word—an effect which has been actually experienced by many thousands in every age of the church, you will want no farther evidence of its divine origin: you will know for yourselves that it is the power and the wisdom of God unto salvation to "every one that believeth." And till this effect is experienced, remember that the great design for which the sacred oracles have been given, has not been answered in your case; that you have hitherto perused them comparatively in vain; nay, that the light which you have derived from them has served greatly to aggravate all your offences against God, and that without repentance it will greatly aggravate your final condemnation. Whenever therefore you read the holy scriptures, breathe forth the ardent aspirations of your souls for the enlightening and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, that his word may become "quick and powerful—to open your eyes, and to turn you from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that you may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith which is in Christ Jesus." Amen.

DISSERTATION ON THE ABRAHAMICK COVENANT.

(*Concluded from page* 498.)

III. The third, and last thing for our consideration, is the discriminating and significant rite attached to this constitution. A separate and distinct society is usually, not only distinguished by name, but also by some badge, mark, or ceremony. And God was pleased to distinguish his peculiar people at first by the rite of circumcision. This rite, considered as a duty, we have already noticed. It now claims our attention as a significant and discriminating ordinance.

1. Circumcision was the *token* of God's covenant; that is, it was the sign or mark, by which all the male members of the church were to be distinguished from the members of other societies, or from the world at large. And hence a painful and disagreeable rite was enjoined, rather than one which would be more likely to be generally adopted. And whatever some may say respecting the Egyptian origin of circumcision, and of its being practised by others than the descendants of Abraham, reason itself may satisfy any sober mind, that nothing, short of divine authority, could give rise and permanency among any people to such a rite.

2. As a token, or sign, circumcision was not only a mark of membership in the Church of God, but was also *significant* in various respects. It taught that we must pass

out of a natural state into a new and holy relation to God, by a process like crucifixion to the flesh; and by the shedding of blood. That it was significant of regeneration, is evident from Deut. xxx. 6, Col. ii. 11, and Rom. ii. 28, 29. A glance at these texts shows that it signified a change of heart, and also a holy life; and that as a sign it pointed all who received it, to that separation from the world and to that love and devotedness to God, without which none could enjoy his fellowship. In other words, it was significant of obedience. "I testify," says Paul, "to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." Gal. v. 3. And as circumcision marked God's people as the members of his church, so it bound them to walk according to his laws.

3. Circumcision is called a seal, Rom. iv. 11,—a seal of Abraham's righteousness. A seal among men is used for various purposes; but the apostle appears to use it in this place, for *approving* and *ratifying*. Abraham, by faith, brought forward a righteousness which God approved and put a seal upon, as good and valid. The seal however, being applied to Abraham's person, and not directly to his righteousness, we are to consider it as sealing him righteous, and accepted of God. And being a visible seal, it pointed him out as having a right to all the visible privileges of God's church. And here let it be remarked that faith, in Abraham, furnished an acceptable righteousness, and was a prerequisite for the reception of circumcision both for himself and his household. It was upon the account of his *faith*, that he was constituted and called the father of the *faithful;* and if his faith procured for himself and his household, membership in the church of God, shall the faith of a believing parent be less efficacious now? This view of circumcision, as a seal, shows that with Abraham it answered two purposes —it sealed him as a righteous person, and it sealed him and his household as members of God's visible church. This distinction may remove a difficulty which has been felt by some, respecting the seal being applied to the children of believing parents. If it sealed them as righteous and accepted of God, then no such children could ever be lost. This, however, it does not—it seals them merely as members of the visible church, and as entitled to all her privileges. If they should die in infancy, God appears bound to save them upon the faith of their parents; but if they live to the years of understanding, they must have the faith of their parents, or they will perish in their own unbelief. It is the Holy Spirit, the internal seal, which seals the soul an heir of eternal life.

Thus circumcision, as a token, sign, and seal, distinguished the members of the church from the world—it directed their attention to actual separation—to a change of heart and a holy life, and sealed them to the enjoyment of the inestimable privileges of God's gracious constitution. Now if such be the meaning and uses of circumcision, it is evident that the covenant with Abraham, was an *ecclesiastical constitution*, and that he and his household were formally as much a church of God, as any society now upon earth.

It would be travelling beyond our limits, to prove in detail, that baptism has come in the place of circumcision; but I would ask, what purposes are answered by the former, that are not answered by the latter? Is baptism a distinguishing mark of visible church membership? so was circumcision. Is baptism significative of regeneration? so was circumcision. Does baptism enlist in the service of God and bind to obedience? so did circumcision. Does baptism seal to believers their acceptance with God, and their children, with themselves, the inheritors of God's church? so did circumcision. The only difference is, the one was a painful and bloody rite, the other a simple rite of washing—the one signified that the blessings of salvation were then granted

more sparingly, and confined principally to the natural posterity of Abraham—the other that they flow down now as showers, or as mighty streams to water the whole earth.

In all other respects they signify precisely the same things; and this agreement of signification at once proves that baptism has come in the room of circumcision, and that the Church of God now, is the same society that it was when organized in the family of Abraham. It is evident from the remarks just made, that baptism can do no more now, as a significant ordinance, than circumcision did, when in force; and therefore if circumcision was not a sign of church membership, neither is baptism, and if baptism be a sign of church membership now, circumcision was formerly. This argument appears to us to establish, beyond reasonable controversy, that the church is the same society at the present day, and under the same constitution, that it was when first organized in the days of Abraham.

Again, it follows, that as circumcision was the distinguishing sign of church membership, and was the birthright of children and servants born in the house of a believer, under the constitution in Old Testament times, and as Abraham and his seed were bound to administer it to them in their successive generations; so is baptism, the substitute for circumcision, the birthright of children and servants born in the house of a believer now, and Christian parents and masters are bound to have it administered to them. And all Christian parents and masters, who will not have their children and servants baptized, do not keep God's constitution, but throw their children and servants out of their inheritance; and thus at once violate the command of God and the principles of justice and humanity. They virtually declare that Christ, instead of enlarging and extending the privileges formerly enjoyed, has stripped the church of a dear and important privilege, and driven her tender and defenceless offspring from his Father's house. We know that this was not the case. He came not to purge his Father's house of the babes and sucklings, who hailed him as the Messiah, and sung the appropriate hosannas to his name. He said "suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." He gave charge to Simon Peter to feed his sheep and his *lambs.* He charges Christian parents to bring up their children in *his* nurture and admonition. And must all this be done for those who are debarred from the distinguishing mark of his children—his lambs?

Having taken this view of the nature and uses of circumcision, and shown that it is superseded, or rather succeeded, by baptism, we are prepared to attend to the question, why were not females of the household of Abraham and of his seed, made partakers of the distinguishing rite, circumcision? A solution of this question is of some importance, since an argument has been formed from it, against baptism coming in the room of circumcision. It is said—"Females neither old nor young were circumcised, and thus not favoured with the distinguishing mark of membership in that society, formed in the family of Abraham; but females do partake of baptism, upon their faith, under the New Testament, in common with men, and are thus recognised as members of the church; therefore that society formed in the family of Abraham was not the church, or females were not members of it, and baptism has not come in the room of circumcision." This argument is more plausible than solid.—It will appear to be so from the following observations. First, it is of no force unless it be taken for granted that Abraham and Sarah were not *one*, according to the institution of God; and that the husband never can stand for the wife, and secure for her social privileges. But to grant this would be contrary to matter of fact, in a variety of familiar cases. We know

that the wife is identified with her husband, in the law of naturalization, in all well ordered communities; and that all her civil rights and privileges are secured and defended, either by her father or by her husband. It is only in criminal cases, or cases of trespass, where she acts by herself, that she is immediately accountable before the courts of justice. In all civil cases—cases of rights and debts, her husband stands and acts for her. And this was the case we find under the Old Testament dispensation. And yet the female sex, then, were denied many privileges which they enjoy under the gospel. It was not therefore absolutely necessary for Sarah, or the wives of believers, under the Old Testament dispensation, to be circumcised, in order to be members of the church.—They enjoyed membership through their fathers and husbands, and in their circumstances, needed not the distinguishing rite.

Again: the argument has no force unless it be granted that the *extension* of a privilege, destroys its nature and use. This consideration we believe to be not only important, but conclusive. Does it follow from the *extension* of the external rite, in the form of baptism to females under the New Testament dispensation, that baptism has not come in the room of the rite in the form of circumcision? It certainly does not—especially as there was no good reason why females should receive the external rite of circumcision under the Old Testament dispensation, and there is good reason why they should receive the same rite in substance, in the form of baptism, under the new. Let it be well observed, that our Saviour teaches us that he came to "send division upon the earth"—to set the nearest and dearest relatives at variance with each other. Matt. x. 34—36. And we find in the history of the church, that it so happened, that frequently the wife became a Christian, and the husband remained an heathen, or an infidel. It was therefore necessary, from the nature of the case, not only to change the form of the rite, but to extend it to believing females, and their children. And here it ought to be remarked, that females were naturally and of course admitted to the enjoyment of the rite when changed into the form of baptism, as their ceremonial uncleanness had been removed by washings, as well as sacrifices. The ceremonial purifications exhibited figuratively, the purification from sin by the blood and spirit of Christ. These purifications were common to both sexes. We thus see, both a propriety and necessity, of believing females enjoying baptism, which propriety and necessity do not appear in favour of their being formerly circumcised.

In vain it is further urged that females partook of the ordinance of the passover, and that therefore if baptism has come in the room of circumcision, they ought, in consistency, to have been circumcised. From the circumstances in which the passover was instituted, and from its nature and uses, there was a propriety and a necessity of females partaking of it, which propriety and necessity did not exist in the case of circumcision, as has been already shown. The wives and daughters of Israel, on the night when the passover was instituted, composed a part of the Lord's congregation—they were interested in the Lamb, the substitute for the first-born, and whose flesh was necessary for strengthening them for the journey before them.

There is an important question which yet remains to be discussed, before we dismiss the general subject, viz. when did the constitution go into operation, and when did its promises receive their full and final accomplishment? We answer, that the constitution went into *immediate* operation. Abraham immediately circumcised himself, and all the males of his household. The church then was as completely an organized body, as it is at this hour. It was indeed small, few in number, and was afterwards enlarged, and had, at vari-

ous times, for its proper administration, an increase of officers, rites, and precepts. None of these, however, altered or annulled the original constitution, as the Apostle Paul declares, Gal. iii. 17. Like all the constitutions and works of God, it was to produce its effects and accomplish its designs, progressively. Thus when the church was formed and put into operation in the family of Abraham, it was soon spread out into the twelve families of Jacob, under the joint rule of the twelve patriarchs. They were succeeded by the heads of the numerous families which in a few years sprung from them, who were called elders. And thus the administration of the same constitution was carried on under all the temporary appendages of the superadded Sinai constitution, extending the blessings and privileges of Abraham to all the thousands of Israel. At length, under the public ministry of our Saviour and his apostles, its operations were enlarged and its privileges extended, beyond the Jewish nation. The temporary barrier, or wall of partition formed at Sinai, which shut out the heathen world, was thrown down; and Zion, that is, the Church of God, *lengthened her cords, and strengthened her stakes*, according to the prophecy and promise, that "all the nations of the earth might be blessed in Abraham."

This leads us to observe, in the second place, that although the constitution of the church went into immediate operation, yet not into that extensive operation declared in its promissory part, and which it must have before it accomplishes all its designs, or the purposes of God. It must continue in force until Abraham becomes "the Father of all nations; and all nations are blessed in him." This we know was not accomplished in the publick ministry of our Saviour and his apostles—we know it is not accomplished to this hour. Many nations yet know nothing of Abraham, and nothing of the privileges of the church organized in his family. The constitution therefore was not disannulled by our Saviour and his apostles, but is now in full force, and has a more extensive operation than it had at any past period. The four great continents of the earth, and the islands of the sea, are experiencing, in various forms, the blessings promised to Abraham. He is becoming, by the spread of the gospel, the Father of many nations; and all nations are becoming blessed *in* him. How glorious and wonderful are the ways and works of God! Behold yon little cloud in the east, moving on from *Ur* of the Chaldees, growing in magnitude—overspreading the whole heavens, and pouring its prolific showers abroad upon the parched earth. The wilderness and the solitary place are made glad, and the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose. The Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings, and our fallen, wrath withered world, before his march, resumes the primeval beauties of Paradise. The outcast Indian on the banks of the Ganges, and on the plains of Missouri—the sun burnt African, and the shivering Siberian of the north—the Greenlander, and the Californian—the wandering sinners of all climes, sit down with Abraham in the Church of God, and hail him as their common Father in Christ. This is the work of God, and it is wondrous in our eyes.

Let such as deny Abraham to be their Father, and discard the Old Testament and the constitution of the church, there on record, duly consider these things. How do their sentiments comport with this sublime scriptural view of the church? Is it not surprising, that the period, when Christ removed all obstacles, and opened up the way to give full sweep to the constitution of Abraham, and to accomplish its great and precious promises, should be fixed upon by any as the period of its existence, the termination of all its blessings and benign influence? O! let us not thus impeach the truth, the wisdom, the goodness, and faithfulness of

God. Let us manifest a better understanding of his word, his works, and constitutions; and rejoice in the happy, the honourable privilege, of sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, as we hope to sit down with them in the church triumphant in heaven. CLERICUS.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

JESUS OF NAZARETH THE TRUE MESSIAH.

At a time when exertions are making to convert the Jews to the faith of the gospel, it certainly is desirable that Christians in general should be familiar with the leading facts and arguments which should be urged on the Jews; and which, under the Divine blessing, it may be expected will ultimately be effectual to their conversion. Let us then, so far as it can be done in a short compass, show in what manner we may unanswerably prove to a candid Jew, that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah.

I. We may say to him,—Prove the divine mission of *Moses* and you will of necessity establish that of *Jesus*. You cannot demolish the *New* Jerusalem without erecting your batteries on the ruins of the *old*. We wish to offer no disparagement to the miracles and divine mission of Moses, but we must insist that the credentials of Jesus are even more fully authenticated than those of your great lawgiver. Our argument is of the *a fortiori* kind. The miracles of Christ were more numerous, and not less open, incontestable and astonishing, than those of Moses; and in addition to this, they were sealed by the *martyrdom* of many who witnessed them. Did the miracles of Moses, in attestation of a certain truth, *establish* that truth? The miracles of Jesus were wrought in attestation of this truth—that he is the very CHRIST, the hope of Israel; and this truth, therefore, they firmly establish.

II. The verity of the *Old* Testament establishes the truth of the *New*, and requires the belief of its truth; so that if the gospel be rejected, the Old Testament must certainly be abandoned. That a great and glorious prophet is promised in the ancient oracles of God, every Jew joyfully admits (Deut. xviii. 18, 19.). But this prophet, this Shiloh, was to appear before the sceptre had departed from Judah, or a lawgiver from between his feet (Gen. xlix. 10.) His presence in the second temple was to render it superior—for it was the only thing that did render it superior—to the first (Hag. ii. 7—10. Mal. iii. 1.). He was to finish his course at the end of 490 years from the commencement of the reign of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus (Dan. ix. 24.). In this "Branch of Righteousness" the kingdom of David, and the office of the Levites, was to have a perpetual administrator (Jer. xxxiii. 14—18.). If then the sceptre has long since departed from Judah, if not even the earth on which stood the second temple is now to be found, if the seventy weeks mentioned by Daniel must undoubtedly have had their consummation, and if, on any other supposition than the actual advent of the Messiah, the descendants of David have ceased to occupy the throne of Israel, and the ministration of the Levites has long since been suspended—if these things be so, and Messiah is not now seated on the throne of David, all these declarations must be untrue, and the Old Testament itself must be abandoned. In perfect accordance with the preceding declarations, and as what might be expected naturally to result from them, we find, about the time of our Saviour's advent, a prevalent expectation that the great predicted personage, in whom so many prophecies were to have their fulfilment, was now about to appear on the earth. This is fully attested by Joseph. 620, c. 6. and book 18, cap. 12, &c. See also Suetonius' Life of Vespasian; and Tac. lib. 5. All the perversions by which the obvious meaning of the scriptural representations to

which we have referred, is attempted to be set aside, only prove that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." They are entirely novel and unnatural, and completely at variance with the explications of the ancient Rabbies; and of course, must have been adopted only to answer a present purpose. And, as we have said, they are calculated, not only to discredit the New Testament, but to cast into utter uncertainty all the prophecies and representations of the Old—so that whether these explications be true or false, *Judaism*, at any rate, must be subverted.

III. If Jesus Christ be not the true Messiah, all the predictions concerning him, and the marks by which he was to be known are, to say the least, *useless*. That these all do centre in Him whom Christians acknowledge as the Christ of God, the gospel history fully establishes; and if they be applicable to some other individual, only *in common* with Him whom Christians *esteem* the true Messiah, we have no mode of determining which to accredit.

Some of the peculiarities by which Messiah was designated are these —He was to be of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David (Isa. xi. 10.)—He was to be born of a virgin (Isa. vii. 14.). This Ruler in Israel was to come forth out of Bethlehem Ephratah (Mic. v. 2.). They were to give him also gall for his meat; and in his thirst they were to give him vinegar to drink (Ps. lxix. 21.)—He was to be valued at thirty pieces of silver, and these to be given to the potter (Zech. xi. 12, 13.)—He was to ride into Jerusalem on an ass, even a colt the foal of an ass (Zech. ix. 9.)—They were to part his garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture (Ps. xxii. 18.)—He was to descend into the grave and yet not to see corruption (Ps. xvi. 10.)—While a mighty conqueror, he was to be, at the same time, poor, and afflicted, and persecuted, and to suffer for the sins of his people (Isa. liii.)—He was to be a stone which the builders should refuse, and which should nevertheless become the head of the corner (Ps. cxviii. 22.)—While he was to be for a *sanctuary*, he was to be at the same time for a *stone of stumbling*, and for a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and many among them were to stumble and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken (Isa. viii. 14, 15.)—He and the children whom the Lord should give him, were to be for signs and for wonders in Israel, verse 18. He was to be "the desire of all nations," (Hag. ii. 7.)—Unto him, it was predicted, should the gathering of the people be, (Gen. xlix. 10.)—and he should be a ruler among the Gentiles (Ps. cx. Isa. ii.). This "Root of Jesse" was to stand for an ensign of the people; to Him were the Gentiles to seek (Isa. xi. 10—16.). It was but a light thing that he should be God's servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; he was to be given also for a light to the Gentiles, and to be for salvation to the ends of the earth. (Isa. xlix. 6.) Some "were to come from far, and lo, these from the west, and the north, and these from the land of Sinim—" See the whole 49th chapter of Isaiah. Though "many were to be astonished at him, his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men," yet "so was he to sprinkle many nations; the kings were to shut their mouths at him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider." (Isa, lii. 14, 15.). See also the 63d of Isaiah throughout.

If it be maintained that these marks really never applied to Jesus Christ, but have been merely appended to his history by the evangelists, in order to give currency to his imposture—then what, I ask, becomes of the Old Testament history, whose verity depends upon the same, or rather upon *weaker* evidence? By a

Jew, if he will be consistent, the gospel history must necessarily be accredited, and the applicability of these marks to the Messiah of Christians, must be acknowledged to be *real:* and if real they are also *decisive* in favour of his Messiahship. I say they are *decisive*, because many of them are such as no imposter *would* challenge to himself if he were able; for they presuppose his own disgrace and rejection. Many of them also are such as no imposter *could* appropriate to himself, if he were even willing. They were affixed to him by agents over whom he could exercise no control—They were rejection, and mockery, and crucifixion, and death, and interment, and resurrection. These were predicted as marks by which Messiah was to be recognised, and in Jesus of Nazareth they did all meet. *This*, therefore, is He—"We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." John i. 45. Survey his course from the cradle to the grave; he appears the *Messiah* at every step—in his birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension—in his tribe, family, friends, inheritance, and even in his betrayer, "in whom he trusted, which did eat of his bread, and yet lifted up his heel against him,"—(Ps. xli. 9.)—in his humiliation, in his being numbered among the transgressors, (Isa. liii. 12.)—and in his making his grave with the rich in his death; verse 9. To him has been the gathering of the people; he has been a light to the Gentiles; Zion has "lengthened her cords and strengthened her stakes"—the Gentiles are actually come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising. "Lift up thines eyes round about and see, all they gather themselves together, they come to thee, thy sons are come from far, and thy daughters are nursed at thy side—The abundance of the sea is now converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles are come unto thee." (Isa. lx. 3—5.)

If a certain *time* was specified at which Messiah was to make his appearance; if certain marks were laid down by which his person would infallibly be ascertained; and if at the appointed time a certain personage did appear who laid claim to the Messiahship, and if in this person all the appropriate marks of Messiah did meet; if Jehovah himself set his seal to the claim by working miracles in attestation of it; if the claim was so incontestable as to enlist in its behalf a considerable part of the Jewish and Gentile world, though at the sacrifice of their national and family prejudices, of their possessions, and often of their *lives*—if all this be true, who *dare* say that this is not the Christ, the Son of the living God?

Objections against a truth clearly established by direct evidence, ought certainly to have but little weight; and those of the Jews do really appear to be mere cavils—destitute even of plausibility, if fairly examined. When we adduce the 53d chapter of Isaiah, to prove that Messiah "ought to suffer these things and to enter into his glory;" they apply the passage to *themselves;* who though afflicted, are yet an holy people, who know no sin. And yet when we urge upon them that the time of Messiah's advent is already past, they say that it has been delayed on account of their *sins.*—Yet one purpose of his advent was to take away sin. (Zech. xiii. 1. Dan. ix. 24.)

The main argument of the Jews against Christianity is the tradition of their fathers. But even admitting the validity of tradition; if the tradition of the *unbelieving* part proves that Messiah is not yet come, the tradition of those who at early and subsequent periods have *embraced the gospel* must prove the contrary. For the testimony of these latter, although the number that bear it is comparatively small, is the more entitled to credit, because it is contrary to their national pride and prejudice. Another argument on which they place some reliance is, that what God

has ordained he cannot alter. The plans of God we acknowledge, in reply, he never alters. But surely the abrogation of a system may not only not involve any alteration of his plans, but may even form a part of them—this abrogated system being merely intended to answer a certain temporary purpose. Besides, the *fulfilment* of the ceremonial law is not the abolition of it. And if, as the Jews admit, the Gentiles, at and after the advent of the Messiah, are to be brought in, how could the ceremonial law be extended over them? Could every male, from the most distant parts of the world, repair *three times* annually to Jerusalem? Nor on this supposition would the family of Aaron be sufficient for priests, nor that of Levi for ministers. Hence the prediction, "And ye shall be to me a *kingdom* of priests." (Ex. xix. 6.)

Although the children of Israel be "a rebellious house," our "hearts' desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." With humility we desire to remember that "as concerning the gospel they are enemies for *our* sakes," (Rom. xi. 28.) We behold "the severity and goodness of God; on them which fell severity, but towards us goodness." We have seen them "a hissing, and a byeword, and a reproach among all people," and we rejoice "that they shall yet return to Sion with songs and everlasting salvation, and that sorrow and sighing shall flee away forever." We rejoice that "there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and so all Israel shall be saved."—"For a small moment they have been forsaken, but with great mercies will they be gathered."

We rejoice too at the spirit of inquiry prevalent at the present day; that there is a shaking in "the valley of dry bones," and that ere long, as we hope, there "will stand up an exceeding great army;" that there are some among them who are looking to Him whom they have pierced and are mourning. And may we be of that people who, both by our language and our conduct, shall say to the Jews, "O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord;" "come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." If we look at the *past*, we perceive that to them "pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God;" that of them are "the promises, and of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God blessed for ever. Amen." (Rom. ix. 4, 5.) If we look *forward*, we learn "that as the casting away of them has been the reconciling of the world, the receiving of them shall be life from the dead." Gratitude to them, and a regard to our own salvation who are Gentiles, are equally and powerfully urgent in their claims upon our prayers, our exertions, and our purses. Let us merely not say to them, be ye warmed, and filled, and converted—let us give them also those things which are needful to their present and everlasting welfare. The American society for meliorating the condition of the Jews, divests us of the plea of inability to reach the case of the Jews. The benevolence, the sobriety, and scriptural character of its object, as well as the known character of its managers, present it strongly to the attention of those "who pray for the peace of Jerusalem," and whose right hands shall sooner forget their cunning than they forget thee, O Zion.

PHILALETHES.

Miscellaneous.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

CHRISTMAS.

It is known to all who have examined the subject, that we are entirely ignorant of the precise time of our Lord's nativity. There is good reason to believe that the Christian era itself is considerably inaccurate; that our Saviour's birth really took place about four years earlier than the time from which it is commonly reckoned; so that we are now in the year 1827, from the true period of his incarnation. The cause of this error was, that even Christians, to say nothing of others, did not reckon time from the birth of Christ, till about the beginning of the sixth century after his advent; when it was no longer practicable to fix that great epoch with certainty. The publick archives had been destroyed by the burning of the greater part of the city of Rome, in the time of Nero, and probably by his order; and hence, although the empire in the sixth century had long since become Christian, the decree of Augustus for a general taxing, which was cotemporaneous with our Saviour's birth, and the account of his death sent to Rome by Pilate, could not be resorted to, in determining the exact time of these interesting and important events.

The word *Christmas* is composed of the two words *Christ*, and *Mass*, and was first employed to denote the religious service made use of in the Roman Catholick church, in celebrating our Saviour's birth; nor is it improbable, that this very term has increased, if it did not originate, the strong dislike which some protestants have always entertained and expressed, against the performance of any religious service on the day called Christmas.

There seems to be no probability that the great event which Christmas commemorates, happened on the 25th of December; and it is wonderful that Pope Julius, by whom that day was fixed for religious observance, should have decided as he did. Two events, coincident with the incarnation of our Redeemer, are fully known—the resort of the Jews from the most distant parts of Judea, to the city, or place, where they were born, that they might be enrolled and taxed—and the watching of their flocks by night, of the shepherds, in the vicinity of Bethlehem. Now, it is very improbable, that the season of the year the most unfavourable of all for travelling, should have been assigned for the universal attendance of the Jews at the various places of enrolment: and it is still more improbable, that in a climate not very different from that of the southern part of the United States,* shepherds should be "keeping watch over their flocks by night," on the 25th of December —encamped, as they clearly were, in the open fields. Those who have investigated the subject most carefully, have placed our Lord's nativity somewhere between the middle of August and the middle of November; and the best and prevalent opinion is, that it happened in the latter part of September, or in the early part of October.

We have no evidence that Christmas was ever observed as a religious festival till toward the end of the second century of the Christian era, under the Roman emperor *Commodus*. The observance of it, however, soon became general, and continued to be so till the time of the protestant reformation. Neither, indeed, was its observance proscribed or discountenanced by the reformers; otherwise than that this might seem to be implied in the great protestant principle, that the scriptures alone

* *Bethlehem*, in Judea, is placed in the best maps, in Lat. 32° 36′ north, which is very nearly the latitude of Charleston, South Carolina.

contain the laws and institutions which are binding on conscience and obligatory on the church, and that in the scriptures, there is certainly no command, nor any recorded usage of the primitive church, in favour of the observance of Christmas. The protestant churches, nevertheless, both Lutheran and Calvinistick, have, in fact, generally observed the day, not only as a season of social festivity, but by the performance of some religious service commemorative of the birth of Christ. It is believed that the Scotch church and the English Puritans, with their descendants, stand alone, among all the reformed churches whose origin is coeval with the reformation, in their refusal to celebrate Christmas in a religious manner—esteeming such a celebration as a departure from the fundamental principle of protestantism already mentioned; and viewing it as dangerous to make any observance habitual, without a clear scriptural warrant; or to act as if any other day than the Sabbath could lawfully be regarded as sacred. We are now prepared to make the following summary statement.

1. That the religious observance of the day called Christmas is not a divine institution, and therefore to represent or regard it as such, is contrary to truth and duty.

2. That the day of the year, and even the month, in which our Saviour was born, is not known.—The day of his crucifixion we know exactly. It is ascertained by the Jewish Passover, the annual return of which is most clearly specified in the Pentateuch, and has been punctually observed by the Jews in every successive age. But, in the providence of God, we are not permitted to know the day on which our blessed Lord became incarnate.

3. That the incarnation or nativity of the Redeemer of the world, is unquestionably an event which we ought often to recollect, with the deepest admiration and the most lively gratitude, and on suitable occasions to celebrate in social worship.

4. That since the second century of the Christian era the great body of Christians, both catholicks and protestants, have assigned a specifick day for the commemoration of the great event by which a Saviour was given to the world.

5. That some protestant sects, notwithstanding, refuse to observe this day, because they have no scriptural warrant for such an observance, and therefore think that it is wrong in itself, and likely to be followed by bad consequences.

On the last of these items it is proposed to offer a few remarks. The writer is a member of the presbyterian church, honours its steadfast adherence to the sole and paramount authority of scripture, and certainly is not disposed to censure those who are conscientiously scrupulous in regard to the observance of the 25th of December, as a season for the religious commemoration of our Redeemer's nativity. He has, however, no such scruples himself; and he begs leave to state to his fellow Christians the reasons why he thinks their scruples might be laid aside: and he does this with the more freedom, because the publick standards of the presbyterian church say not a word on this subject, either in the Confession of Faith, or in the Larger or Shorter Catechism,—leaving it to be judged of freely, by every individual of our communion.

To meditate with profound and adoring gratitude on the incarnation of the Son of God, on his infinite condescension in assuming our nature —in becoming "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," in being "made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;" and to celebrate all this in acts of publick social worship, no Christian, it is believed, will deny to be an important duty. Nor will it probably be denied, that some special season may with propriety be set apart for a particular attention to this duty. It has been well said, "that a duty which we think we may discharge at *any* time,

we are likely to perform at *no* time." It is certainly prudent and useful, to have a time *appropriated* to every important duty, that it may not be overlooked and neglected. Now, it is feared by the writer, and his fears arise from long observation, that those who have no appropriate season for making the incarnation of our Redeemer the subject of publick discourse, accompanied with special praise and prayer, do too much neglect this duty. It is not affirmed, that *all* the parties concerned are chargeable with this neglect; nor that *any* neglect the duty *altogether*. But that it is *too much*, and *too generally* neglected, is believed to be a fact.

It is not unknown or forgotten by the writer, that days of fasting and thanksgiving are enjoined, in our publick standards, to be observed* "upon special occasions, which are, in their several times and seasons, to be used in a holy and religious manner;" and that this is construed by some, as intimating that there should be no *stated* seasons for these duties. But this is believed to be an unsound construction. The design of the pious and learned framers of our publick formulas of faith, was to withstand the observance of the stated fasts and festivals in the popish church, or any thing of a like nature; because they might, and often did, call those who regarded them to a celebration exactly contrary to the demand of existing circumstances —to fast when they ought to give thanks, and to give thanks when there was a call to be humbled and mourn. This appears to have been particularly in view, both in what we have quoted from the Confession, and in the answer, in the larger Catechism, to the question "what are the sins forbidden in the second commandment." But there is no reason to believe that the framers of our formulas believed, or meant to intimate, that there were not certain subjects that would always and regularly demand gratitude and thanksgiving, and others that would always and regularly call for humiliation and fasting. They only meant to provide for a *due* and *seasonable* regard to these, and to prevent their *interference* with each other. Accordingly we find, that the descendants of the puritans in New England, although they have disregarded the observance of Christmas, have established a custom, which we think a very laudable one, of having an *annual thanksgiving*, and an *annual fast*—both appointed and proclaimed by the civil authority. This custom is continued to the present day; and it would probably be a very unpopular thing, if any governor should violate the usage, by neglecting to appoint a thanksgiving in autumn, or the beginning of winter, and a fast some time in the spring. We not only wish that this usage may be perpetual, but that it may be adopted in every state in the American Union. But we do think that the nativity of our blessed Lord more imperiously demands a day for its annual celebration, than any other event, or series of events, which can deserve the religious regard of a Christian community. And as a specifick day for this purpose has been fixed by long prescription and the general observance of Christians, why should not this day be observed? Only two objections occur to the writer, both of which have already been brought into view. The first is, that it may happen that existing circumstances may call for mourning and humiliation, and not for the publick expression of religious joy, on the 25th of December. Be it so—and on every such occasion, which certainly will not often occur, let another period be assigned for celebrating the Redeemer's incarnation. This will serve to show, unequivocally, that Christmas is not considered as a divine institution; and thus help to remove the second objection—which is, that the regular observance of this

* Confess. Faith, chap. xxi. sec. 5.—Directory for Worship, chap. xix. throughout.

particular day may tend to foster the notion that such observance, like that of the Christian Sabbath, is appointed and required by the great Head of the church.

It seems much to our purpose here to remark, that there are many Calvinists, as well as other protestants, who do not believe—what the writer of this does firmly believe—that the keeping holy to God of the first day of the week, is an institution of divine appointment. They nevertheless generally think, that one day in seven ought to be set apart for religious worship; and they rightly judge, that it would appear whimsical, singular, and affected, as well as that it would be found extremely inconvenient, to observe Wednesday or Thursday, instead of the day which is generally esteemed the Christian Sabbath. The Sabbath therefore they observe, without regarding it as a divine ordinance to do so. Let the same be done in regard to Christmas. As one day in the year is certainly not too much for a special commemoration of our Lord's nativity, it may be set apart for this service, generally on the 25th of December, in concert with other Christians, without the least danger of its being regarded as a divine institution, especially if the people be occasionally reminded that they ought not thus to regard it. The truth is, we live in an age not likely to go to any extreme in taking a human convention for a divine appointment. That age, we rejoice to say, is probably gone by forever. The popular tendency at present, and it is deeply to be regretted, is strongly toward an extreme the very opposite of that we have mentioned —the extreme of denying and disregarding institutions which are clearly sanctioned by divine authority.

We conclude, then, that it is not inconsistent with protestant principles, nor with the most scrupulous regard to the exclusive authority of holy scripture in matters of religion, nor to the spirit of our publick standards of doctrine, that the nativity of Christ should be celebrated on the 25th of December—unless there should at that time be a special call in providence to humiliation, fasting, and prayer; in which event, it is admitted, it ought to give way to the duty demanding immediate regard, and be celebrated on another day, discreetly appointed for the purpose.

It has been remarked, and we have dwelt on the remark, that no specifick day for commemorating our Saviour's appearance in the world is prescribed in scripture, or obligatory on the church of Christ. But this discussion must not be closed without observing distinctly, that it seems to be a fair inference from what we find plainly and fully recorded in the New Testament, that this great event ought to have a particular and animated celebration, in every age of the Christian church. Its occurrence was celebrated in the highest strains of angelick eulogy and rapture. No sooner had the celestial messenger announced the birth of the infant Saviour to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, than "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying—Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." Were the angels filled with holy ecstasy at the Redeemer's incarnation, and shall men, who have infinitely a deeper interest in the event than the angels have, ever contemplate that event without the most elevated gratitude and praise? Was it *specially* celebrated in heaven, and shall it not have a *special* celebration on earth? Did the angel say to the shepherds, "behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people," and shall Christian people not express "their great joy," in the most solemn, publick, and emphatick manner? Do Christians, more than fifty times in a year, observe the first, rather than the seventh day of the week, as the Christian Sabbath, because the work of redemption, completed on that day by the resurrection of Christ Jesus from

the dead, is a greater work, and to a fallen race infinitely more interesting, than that of creation—and shall not one day in the year be set apart to commemorate the first appearance of a Saviour in our world, on the great errand which brought him from heaven to earth? Although no positive precept is left us on this subject, yet the example of the holy angels is left us—and is it not for instruction and imitation? Although the providence of God has so ordered it, that we know not the day of our Lord's nativity—instead of taking this for an intimation that no day is to be observed for its commemoration, may we not more reasonably conclude that the two-fold design was, to prevent a superstitious observance, and to give us the opportunity to appoint one that shall be rational and scriptural, and this as a free will offering? To the writer it seems that if the thoughts suggested by these inquiries be pursued, and weighed with a spirit of candour and impartiality, they must lead Christian congregations to conclude, that they ought to celebrate, in as distinct and impressive a manner as they can devise, the most important event that was ever witnessed by angels and men—the gift of God's only begotten and well beloved Son, for the redemption of a lost and ruined world CHRISTOPHILOS.

The following communication is from the correspondent who furnished the article entitled THE DEACON, in our number for May last. His present favour was thus introduced:

"Sir—I was not pleased with THE DEACON, and yet the story of the *widow* it is a pity to lose. It rigidly adheres to fact. I do not in this assertion include *Lazy Bob*, &c. In the narrative of the class-leader there is no fiction.

"If you judge it worth while you can *assure* yourself of the *widow's* story, by conversing with the Rev. ———."

The name of the Rev. gentleman was here specified, and our correspondent has also given his own name. We have not thought it "worth while" to make the inquiry suggested; because we are as perfectly satisfied of the truth of what our correspondent asserts, whom we have long known, as we could be if it were corroborated by a hundred witnesses. The whole narrative must speak for itself, and its *marvels* be disposed of by every reader as he may think right. We insert it in our pages because it affords a graphical description of a country funeral in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia; relates a melancholy instance of the dangerous consequences of trusting to pretenders to medical skill; narrates the conversion of a Methodist class-leader, and makes some remarks which we think worthy of a very serious regard by all who may peruse them.

THE DEACON, OR A COUNTRY FUNERAL.

"Margaret was a *hard* honest woman," said lazy Bob, (a shirking worthless fellow, that lived nobody knew how,) as the Deacon stood a few moments at the door of the deceased widow. The speaker was himself very *liberal* among idlers in a pot-house: and his family were welcome to what *remained* of his *accidental* earnings. "Bob," said the Deacon, "Margaret had three infant children, and little enough to educate them. Her delicate health made it very improbable that she would live to raise them. The world, on which it was evident they would soon be thrown, is *hard* enough, but not quite so *honest* as Margaret was."

"She was too honest," said Bob. "She refused to sell whiskey, because there was nothing to be made on it, without reducing it with water. Some of the shopkeepers are not so scrupulous. There's Billy Small makes his so weak, a fellow might drink it in harvest without water: but some of his whiskey got sour in his own store: he lost a whole barrel."

Bob was correct in this fact. "You told me you wanted the wine for *immediate use*," said a wine merchant to a country gentleman, who gave him a glass of his own manufacture, compounded of things, which, as friend Elias ——— says, (speaking however of medical combinations,) "God never designed to be compounded:" and he adds—"The doctors *kill* nine out of ten, and the chemists assist them."

The neighbours, assembled in the house, at the widow's funeral, conversed, as usual, on the news of the day, and the merits of the deceased. "She made her peace *so nice* with her Saviour," said a lady. This lady would have said just the same of one who had never thought of her salvation till the earthly tabernacle was evidently falling; but had then acknowledged herself a sinner, received the eucharist, and died. The lady herself did not cross the threshold of a church twice a year. Yet she had a bigotted attachment to her own denomination, and an utter contempt for *Irish religions* and *Methodists*.

"Aye, aye, she died *happy*," said a man, taking a chew of tobacco. The Deacon had heard him express just the same consolatory persuasion concerning a drunkard, whom death had sobered, but whom the approach of death did not even alarm.

There is a generation in some of our country places, perhaps in our cities too, who have hardly knowledge and impression of religious truth sufficient to prevent them from talking ludicrously, when they really mean to talk seriously. The hope of future bliss, when they do indulge it, that is when they think of the subject at all, seems to be founded in some cases on their honesty, although that is sometimes very questionable. In others, the reliance is on their being good neighbours, however doubtful that fact may be. Others, and perhaps the most numerous class, comfort themselves with the reflection and remark, that they are *no Pharisees*. There is nothing, probably, that more affectingly indicates the necessity of religious experience, and prudence, and fidelity, in a Christian teacher, than the extent to which an ignorant people of this kind turn many of the most salutary truths into poison.—If it be not counteracted, it must destroy them.

"Was there a sermon yesterday, Peter?" said the Deacon, once to a labourer, referring to the funeral of Peter's mother.—For in some country congregations a sermon is preached on the death of every member, of every age, and every character. "Yes," said Peter, "and Mr. ——— *did give it* to the *rich* people. Tommy ——— held down his head the whole time." The fact was, that this was the only occasion that had drawn Peter to church for many years. The appearance was new to him. But in reality careworn Thomas ——— was in the habit of leaning forward at every sermon, that he might sleep the more conveniently. And when not asleep, he was engrossed by day and by night with plans to increase his wealth; and he probably heard as little of this sermon as of any other. The discourse contained the usual solemn warning both to rich and poor, against the love of the world.

Nothing is more certain, than that a *seemingly* pious man *may* be the very reverse; that a disposition to contemn those whom we think less holy than ourselves is no indication of true piety; that the practice of some external duties may yet leave the heart enslaved to sin; and that a professor of religion, desiring only to be seen of men, is abhorred of God.

A pious minister may describe a Pharisee to his flock correctly, and *so far* discharge his duty. But if, through fear or affection, he fails to make those of his flock who possess the character apply it to themselves, he does them an inconceivable injury, and incurs an awful responsibility for himself. There are many religionists now, who are emphatically Pharisees; and who differ from those in the time of our Saviour in nothing but in circumstances. It may

be that what little of religion, or rather of its appearance, which they possess, consists in an adherence to elements more "weak and beggarly," than those of him who scowled on the publican; while their most striking religious characteristic is a haughty, hearty, and heedless contempt, of all denominations more zealous than themselves,—whom yet *they* consider as incorrigible Pharisees, and so represent them.

"She died safely," said the Deacon, addressing himself more particularly to a pious Methodist sitting beside him—"Her tranquil confidence was not *essential* to salvation." Here the good man groaned deeply, with closed eyes. "But it was *her happiness* to enjoy it: and it is our duty to seek it;" here he opened his eyes. "The cause why we do not possess it, is always some sinful defect in ourselves."—The pious man here rose from his chair—"Dear brother!" said he, and sat down. His heart was full. It was filled with Christian joy to find that the Deacon was not in such dangerous error as he had at first feared. "Joy in the Lord," said the Deacon, "ought not to be our primary object. To know and do his will, should be that object. Our first great work is repentance. And as far as we are conscious that we are true believers, so far we know that we are justified—and may rejoice in hope."

The good Methodist did not reject or controvert this statement. But he was manifestly not particularly pleased with it. That denomination teach their members that Christian joy is *essentially* connected with the renunciation of all sin. But they appear to allow to an incipient faith not merely a joyful hope, but the triumphant confidence of a confirmed Christian. They seem to consider the *happiness* which it produces, as a criterion of true religion, and to encourage a mere babe in Christ to adopt the language which St. Paul used in the close of life.

"Yes, yes, she *did die safely*," said a thin keen-eyed, discontented, Christian lady—a sensible and good woman, but terribly vexed with *temptations* to slander. "She *was* a good woman. I have *long* thought so. Ever since I spent an evening with her, *I* have set her down as such. My mind was then made up." This lady devoted too much of her time to calculations respecting the exact degrees of piety possessed by individuals—calculations very profitable with regard to ones-self, but for which, with regard to others, we have not the data necessary to a correct decision.—God has reserved them to himself.

"*My mind* was made up," said the Deacon, "when she was baptized." The Deacon, whatever his other faults were, and he had many, was more employed in judging himself than others. He never doubted the real piety of professing Christians, in an enlightened congregation, if they were moral in their lives. Devotional habits, and correct religious experience, when known to him, *confirmed* his confidence in the piety of such professors. But even if mistaken with regard to some, his mistake was injurious to no one.

She whose remains were about to be deposited where they now rest in hope, was neither ignorant, careless, pharisaic, nor presumptuous. Her reason had been exercised on, and instructed by, that holy book, which she read by day, and meditated on in the watches of the night. She devoted herself to the Redeemer in comparative health and prosperity. Yet probably she was led to seriousness by an impressive dispensation of divine Providence. Sometime after the death of her husband, the Lord opened her heart to attend to the things that were spoken in his house, which she frequented: and she and her children were, in consequence, baptized.

"He died *in prison* a happy death," said one good man of another. The widow died a happy death, but in that death she suffered

the tortures of the stake. She lingered in the pains of *burning* for the greater part of a whole day.

It is surprising, that such things can occur at this period of the world, and in the places where they do. It resulted in this case from an assemblage of causes. This righteous person was given into the hands of the wicked, and was tortured to death in her own house, and under the eyes of affectionate relatives and friends, none of whom interposed soon enough for her rescue.

It is not designed to go through the disgusting detail of her cruel usage. Her relatives, anxious for her life, urged her to try a ——— doctor. Perhaps a lingering hope of a return to health may also have weighed with her. But of this, if it were so, she was not aware. The ——— doctor came, and in fact took possession of the house. When he departed, he left her in charge of *his* nurse. The employment of this assistant was the condition of his prescribing for her.

The widow sustained their horrible treatment only a few days. She was compelled to take uncommon *quantities* of *unknown* medicines; and when actually dying, to undergo the most severe and useless medical treatment. The ——— doctor told her, even at this time, that her cure was certain. But the widow knew, and said she was dying.

The second and last visit which he made, was on the day previous to her death. A pious friend and neighbour called to see her on that day, whom she implored not to leave her in the hands of these persons. The lady promised to remain, and did so, till she ceased to breathe—just before daybreak, on the following morning.

After taking a dose of medicine on the morning of her last day, she told her friend she could not survive long, for she was *burning* to death. From that moment, till her end on the subsequent morning, she endured unceasing agonies, of a most uncommon kind. Convulsed with pain, she implored relief from God. She begged her friends to pray for the mitigation of her sufferings, and that she might be enabled to bear them patiently. The mortifying reflection is, that they were the effect of human art and avarice.

After the dose of medicine just mentioned, her friend interposed to prevent any more being given to her. The ——— doctor and his nurse retired to another room quarrelling. Among other things she was heard to say to him, "You have done it at last." Late at night he requested brandy, and went to bed intoxicated.

The widow, in the midst of her sufferings, asked for her will. She requested it to be endorsed, and returned to the place where it had been deposited. "All is now done," said she to a pious woman who had nursed her, and still remained: "Be good to my children."

Her confidence in Christ never failed. Her soul was tranquil; and her assurance of future bliss was humble, but *unwavering*. She died in horrible agony, but in the exercise of *faith*, and *struggling to be patient and resigned.*

During the preceding day the ——— doctor demanded —— dollars, as his charge. When his patient had been dead about fifteen minutes, he increased his demand one half. There were only three or four women in the house, beside *his* nurse, who remained when he went away. They were glad to be rid of him.—They paid him and he departed.

It was now light. The women were all in the room where the deceased lay. They were at a loss what to do, on account of an unnatural warmth in the body. They were ignorant that it proceeded from the medicines. It continued nine hours after death.

About an hour after the victim had ceased to suffer, an alarming noise shook the house. The noise is to this moment unaccounted for. The whole ceiling of the room seemed on fire. The women were horror struck. "What is it?" said the affrighted

nurse;—"*I* did what I was ordered. *He* will have to answer for it."

The noise continued long. No cause could be discovered, though every part of the house, *during its continuance*, was carefully searched. "Had it not been light," said a pious class-leader, when this narrative was given by one of the persons present, "you would have seen the flames." "We ought not," said the Deacon, "to suppose such occurrences supernatural. I have heard similar, but slighter noises, in old houses. At any rate, we do not really know that the causes here were other than natural. It were better, as we cannot account for the fact, to suspend our judgment. But there is a distinction, very little regarded—this was certainly *providential*. It *may* prevent a similar occurrence."

Devout men were now carrying the deceased down the village street, and the class-leader and the Deacon were following among her friends. "You think then," said the Deacon, "this noise was supernatural." "I have no doubt of it," said the class-leader. "Something as remarkable happened early in life to myself. My father was a Dunkard. He was a serious man; he never allowed us to swear, or grossly to violate the Lord's day. But we might play on it, as children usually do. We had no instruction. We lived at a considerable distance, in the country, from our place of worship in this village. We children never attended worship, public or private. We heard, however, pious conversation, especially when the preachers visited us. Old ——— came often—he preached regularly here at that period.

"At twelve years of age my favourite sister died of the small-pox. She lay in a back room on the first floor of the house. She had not spoken for several days; my mother and others were in her room: I walked to the front door, and was standing there, when I heard her voice distinctly. It was a sound like a continued mournful O..... I could not be mistaken—it was clearly and unquestionably hers.

"I ran to the room, deeply affected with the melancholy sound. I asked the cause. Nothing had occurred there. They smiled at my inquiry respecting the voice. My mother ridiculed it. But it was a *supernatural* warning of her death." "I would say," replied the Deacon, "it was *providential*. It was beneficial to your soul—whencesoever it proceeded, it was to you the voice of God."

"It was supernatural," said the class leader. "It was a *death-token*. That voice is still in my ears. In all my wanderings it never left me. My sister died in a few days. Her death was pious and happy. I was much impressed, and became serious. I was *truly converted*. I was in total ignorance, but was led by Divine goodness. My pillow at night has often been wet with tears shed for the love of my Redeemer.

"——— was old and ugly. He wore a large beard. It was his custom to kiss the children, when departing. Before this I would have run from him rather than shake his hands. But now, when I saw him about to leave the house, I ran *from any thing* to take leave of him.

"My serious impressions continued for several years. I came to this village to learn a trade, and here my impressions wore off. After my apprenticeship had expired, I resided in the city. On the commencement of the first yellow fever I left it, and went to ———. I settled there with my brother, and our business was prosperous. But I was continually wretched. The voice followed me. It was in my ears—it was in my heart. At horse-races, cards, and every kind of vice, it still pursued me. I was conscious I was a sinful backsliding man, and destitute of true religion. But I thought if I were again among the good people I once knew here, the probability would be greater of my obtaining religion again. I had been at ——— thir-

teen years. I could remain there no longer. I divided our property with my brother, and told him I left that place for ever. To get true religion was in part my motive.

"I settled here, and attended my old place of worship. But I was *as a door on its hinges:* I derived no benefit. I married—My wife died, leaving me with a young family. I found it almost impossible to get a housekeeper, who would stay at home with my children. At last I engaged a person, (highly recommended to me) on condition that she should attend *no religious night-meeting*. But the first Lord's day evening she staid out till twelve o'clock. About that hour she knocked at the door. I went to it, almost determined to turn her off immediately. She told me she had been at worship. She sobbed aloud, and declared she had been unable to leave the place. On a sudden the thought struck me—here is true religion: here is what I need: dare I oppose it? I left the spot.

"Her place of worship was the Methodist meeting-house. I thought I might there find the blessing I sought. I went there on the next Lord's day evening. I was deeply concerned. Mr. ———, after the publick exercises were over, requested all such members as chose, and all under concern to remain. A number of persons remained. He then requested all who only staid from curiosity to go. 'He does not wish me to stay,' said I to a friend; and I rose to depart. 'You hear what he says,' replied my friend; 'he requests *all under concern* to remain.' 'Then he requests me to remain,' said I, and sat down. Several under concern kneeled at the altar. I sat still and wept freely. I was much distressed. M. ——— came to me. He expressed his joy to see me thus, and invited me to his house at the class meeting on the next evening. A party of pleasure took me in another direction. But I neither communicated nor received pleasure. The next Monday evening I went to the class meeting.

"A few days after this, working in my garden, bemoaning my sad state, determined to serve God and forsake all sin, on a sudden there was poured into my soul a joy, that he who has not *experienced it, cannot conceive.* I left the Dunkards; among the Methodists I received the truth: there I have remained."

The narrative had been interrupted—Dust had been committed to dust, and ashes to ashes; and that voice had been again heard on earth, which was once heard from heaven—"*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth (yea saith the Spirit) that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*"

EXTRACTS FROM MR. IRVING'S "ORATIONS AND ARGUMENTS."

Agreeably to an intimation given in our last number, we now offer to our readers some extracts from the publications of the Rev. EDWARD IRVING, who is at present attracting an unrivalled attention in London, both as a speaker and a writer. We have not been able, as yet, to get a sight of the volume of "orations and arguments" which he has recently sent abroad; and on which all the criticks in Great Britain, great and small, are exercising their acumen, and lavishing their remarks, commendatory and condemnatory. Our first extracts shall be taken from the Eclectick Review, which, with some pretty severe, and we think perfectly just strictures, gives a very favourable verdict, in regard to the general character of Mr. Irving's work. Our object is to exhibit what has been said by Mr. I., and not by his reviewers. But we shall take a few sentences from the latter, both because they are explanatory, and because they serve to show what different criticks think and say of the author of the extracts.—From the

Eclectick Review we make the subsequent quotation.

"We shall now lay before our readers some specimens of the powerful character of his declamation, reserving till the close any further observations on his style, and the theological merits of the volume.

"The Orations are on the following subjects. I. The Preparation for consulting the Oracles of God.—II. The Manner of consulting them.—III. and IV. The Obeying of the Oracles of God. We take for our first extract, the conclusion to the second oration.

"Why, in modern times, do we not take from the Word that sublimity of design and gigantic strength of purpose which made all things bend before the saints, whose praise is in the Word and the Church of God? Why have the written secrets of the Eternal become less moving than the fictions of fancy, or the periodical works of the day; and their impressiveness died away into the imbecility of a tale that hath been often told? Not because man's spirit hath become more weak. Was there ever an age in which it was more patient of research, or restless after improvement? Not because the Spirit of God hath become backward in his help, or the Word divested of its truth—but because we treat it not as the all-accomplished wisdom of God; the righteous setting works of men alongside of it, or masters over it, the world altogether apostatizing from it unto folly. We come to meditate it, like armed men to consult of peace—our whole mind occupied with insurrectionary interests; we suffer no captivity of its truth. Faith, which should brood with expanded wings over the whole heavenly legend, imbibing its entire spirit—what hath it become? A name to conjure up theories and hypotheses upon. Duty likewise hath fallen into a few formalities of abstaining from amusements, and keeping up severities, instead of denoting a soul girt with all its powers for its Maker's will. Religion also, a set of opinions and party distinctions separated from high endowments, and herding with cheap popular accomplishments—a mere serving-maid of every day life; instead of being the mistress of all earthly, and the preceptress of all heavenly sentiments, and the very queen of all high gifts and graces and perfections in every walk of life.

"To be delivered from this dwarfish exhibition of that plant which our heavenly Father hath planted, take up this holy book. Let your devotions gather warmth from the various exhibitions of the nature and attributes of God. Let the displays of his power overawe you, and the goings forth of his majesty still you into reverend observance. Let his uplifted voice awake the slumber of your spirits, and every faculty burn in adoration of that image of the invisible God which his word reveals. If Nature is reverend before Him, how much more the spirit of man for whom he rideth forth in his state! Let his Holiness, before which the pure seraph veils his face, and his Justice, before which the heavens are rebuked, humble our frail spirits in the dust, and awaken all their conscious guilt. Then let the richness of his Mercy strike us dumb with amazement, and his offered grace revive our hopes anew; and let his Son, coming forth with the embraces of his love, fill our spirits with rapture. Let us hold him fast in sweet communion; exchange with him affection's kindest tokens; and be satisfied with the sufficiency of his grace; and let the strength of his Spirit be our refuge, his all-sufficient strength our buckler and our trust!

"Then, stirred up through all her powers, and awakened from the deep sleep of Nature and oblivion of God, (which among visible things she partaketh) our soul shall come forth from the communion of the Word, full of divine energy and ardour, prepared to run upon this world's theatre the race of duty for the prize of life eternal. She shall erect herself beyond the measures and approbation of men, into the measures and approbation of God. She shall become like the saints of old, who, strengthened by such repasts of faith, 'subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens.'" pp. 47—9.

"In enforcing the awful alternative, 'Obey the Scriptures, or you perish,' after describing the hopeless doom of the sinner, in a passage of considerable force and vigour, and, we doubt not, extremely impressive in the delivery, though in a style somewhat too florid for the press, the preacher exclaims:

"'Tis written, 'tis written, 'tis sealed of heaven, and a few years shall reveal it all. Be assured it is even so to happen to the despisers of holy writ. With this in arrear, what boots liberty, pleasure, enjoy-

ment—all within the hour-glass of time, or the round earth's continent, all the sensibilities of life, all the powers of man, all the attractions of woman!

"Terror hath sitten enthroned on the brows of tyrants, and made the heart of a nation quake; but upon this peaceful volume there sits a terror to make the mute world stand aghast. Yet not the terror of tyranny neither, but the terror of justice which abides the scorners of the Most High God, and the revilers of his most gracious Son. And is it not just, though terrible, that he who brooked not in heaven one moment's disaffection, but launched the rebel host to hell, and bound them evermore in chains of darkness, should also do his sovereign will upon the disaffected of this earth, whom he hath long endured and pleaded with in vain. We are fallen, 'tis true—we found the world fallen into ungodly customs, 'tis true—here are we full grown and mature in disaffection, most true. And what can we do to repair a ruined world, and regain a lost purity? Nothing—nothing can we do to such a task. But God hath provided for this pass of perplexity; he hath opened a door of reconciliation, and laid forth a store of help, and asks at our hand no impossibilities, only what our condition is equal to in concert with his freely offered grace.

"These topics of terror, it is very much the fashion of the time to turn the ear from, as if it were unmanly to fear pain. Call it manly or unmanly, it is Nature's strongest instinct—the strongest instinct of all animated nature: and to avoid it is the chief impulse of all our actions. Punishment is that which law founds upon, and parental authority in the first instance, and every human institution from which it is painful to be dismembered. Not only is pain not to be inflicted without high cause, or endured without trouble, but not to be looked on without a pang: as ye may judge, when ye see the cold knife of the surgeon enter the patient's flesh, or the heavy wain grind onward to the neck of a fallen child. Despise pain—I wot not what it means. Bodily pain you may despise in a good cause; but let there be no motive, let it be God's simple visitation, spasms of the body for example, then how many give it license, how many send for the physician to stay it? Truly, there is not a man in being, whom bodily pain, however slight, if incessant, will not turn to fury or to insensibility—embittering peace, eating out kindliness, contracting sympathy, and altogether deforming the inner man. Fits of acute suffering which are soon to be over, any disease with death in the distance, may be borne; but take away hope, and let there be no visible escape, and he is more than mortal that can endure. A drop of water incessantly falling upon the head, is found to be the most excruciating of all torture, which proveth experimentally the truth of what is said.

"Hell, therefore, is not be despised, like a sick bed, if any of you be so hardy as to despise a sick bed. There are no comforting kindred, no physician's aid, no hope of recovery, no melancholy relief of death, no sustenance of grace. It is no work of earthly torture or execution, with a good cause to suffer in, and a beholding world or posterity to look on, a good conscience to approve, perhaps scornful words to revenge cruel actions, and the constant play of resolution or study of revenge. It is no struggle of mind against its material envelopments and worldly ills, like stoicism, which was the sentiment of virtue nobly down-bearing the sense of pain. I cannot render it to fancy, but I can render it to fear. Why may it not be the agony of all diseases the body is susceptible of, with the anguish of all deranged conceptions, and disordered feelings, stinging recollections, present remorses, bursting indignations, with nothing but ourselves to burst on, dismal prospects, fearful certainties, fury, folly, and despair.

"I know it is not only the fashion of the world, but of Christians, to despise the preaching of future wo; but the methods of modern schools, which are content with one idea for their gospel, and one motive for their activity; we willingly renounce for the broad methods of the Scripture, which bring out ever and anon the recesses of the future, to up-bear duty and down-bear wickedness, and assail men by their hopes and fears as often as by their affections, by the authority of God as often as by the constraining love of Christ, by arguments of reason, and of interest no less. Therefore, sustained by the frequent example of our Saviour, the most tender-hearted of all beings, and who to man hath shown the most excessive love; we return, and give men to wit, that the despisers of God's law and of Christ's gospel, shall by no means escape the most rigorous fate. Pain, pain inexorable, tribulation and anguish shall be their everlasting doom. The smoke of their torments ascendeth for ever and ever. One frail thread snapped, and they are down to the bottomless pit. Think of him who had a sword suspended by a hair over his naked neck while he lay and feasted,—think of yourselves suspended over the pit of perdition by the flimsy thread of life—a thread near worn, weak in a thousand places, ever threatened by the fatal shears which soon shall clip it.

You believe the Scriptures; then this you believe, which is true as that Christ died to save you from the same.

"If you call for a truce to such terrifick pictures, then call for mercy against the more terrifick realities. But if you be too callous or too careless to call for mercy and ensure repentance, your pastors may give you truce to the pictures, but God will give no abeyance to the realities into which they are dropping evermore, and you shall likewise presently drop, if you repent not." pp. 64—8.

"It would not be difficult to select from this portion of the volume, other passages of equal force of thought and of expression; but Mr. Irving seems only to be trying his hand in the Orations: he appears still more of the orator, as well as rises higher in the style of his thoughts, in the subsequent series of discourses. We subjoin the contents of the 'Argument.'

"Part I. The plan of the Argument; with an inquiry into Responsibility in general, and God's right to place the world under Responsibility. II. and III. The Constitution under which it hath pleased God to place the World. IV. The good Effects of the above Constitution, both upon the individual and upon political society. V. Preliminaries of the solemn Judgment. VI. The Last Judgment. VII. The Issues of the Judgment. VIII. The only Way to escape Condemnation and Wrath to come. IX. Review and Application of the Argument."

"We shall not attempt an analysis of the 'Argument.' We hasten to give one more extract, which we take from the concluding discourse, in which Mr Irving has put forth all his strength.

"Do you disbelieve it then? Do you think God will not be so bad as his word? When did he fail? Did he fail at Eden, when the world fell? Did he fail at the deluge, where the world was cleansed of all animation, save a handful? Did he fail upon the cities of the plain, though remonstrated with by his friend, the father of the faithful? Failed he in the ten plagues of Egypt, or against the seven nations of Canaan; or, when he armed against his proper people, did ever his threatened judgments fail? Did he draw off when his own Son was suffering, and remove the cup from his innocent lips? And think ye he will fail, brethren, of that future destiny, from which to retrieve us he hath undertaken all his wondrous works unto the children of men? Why, if it were but an idle threat, would he not have spared his only begotten Son, and not delivered him up to death? That sacred blood, as it is the security of heaven to those who trust in it, is the very seal of hell to those who despise it.

"Disbelieve you cannot; brave it out you dare not; then you must hope, at some more convenient season to reform. So hoped the five virgins who slumbered and slept without oil in their lamps; and you know how they fared. Neither have you forgotten how the merchant, and the farmer, and the sons of pleasure, who refused the invitation to the marriage feast of the king's son, were consumed with fire from heaven. What is your life, that you should trust in it: is it not even a vapour that speedily passeth away? What security have you that heaven will warn you before hand, or that heaven will help you to repentance whenever you please? Will the resolution of your mind gather strength as your other faculties of body and mind decay? Will sin grow weaker by being a while longer indulged; or God grow more friendly by being a while longer spurned; or the Gospel more persuasive by being a while longer set at naught? I rede you, brethren, to beware of the thief of time, Procrastination. This day is as convenient as to-morrow; this day is yours, to-morrow is not; this day is a day of mercy, to-morrow may be a day of doom.

"But the work is not the work of a moment, that it should be put off like the making of a will or the writing of a farewell epistle. It is the work of a lifetime, and too great a work for a lifetime. And if St. Paul, after such ceaseless labours and unwearied contentions with his nature, had still his anxieties, and speaks of the righteous* as being hardly or with difficulty saved, how do you dare to defer it from time to time, as a thing that can at any season, and in any space be performed?

"And, oh heavens! is God to be thus entreated by his creatures? Are they to insist for their own convenience, and put off the honour of his friendship from time to time, preferring this indulgence, that engagement, and trifling downright with his proffered invitations? And being thus put off, will the King of the Universe endure it patiently? Yes, he endures it patiently—that is, he leaves you to yourselves, and does not cut you off with prompt and speedy vengeance. But he leaves you to yourselves, and every refusal hardens you a little more, and every

* It should be, St. Peter—see 1 Eph. iv. 18.

resistance closes up another avenue of grace, and every postponement places further off the power of acceptance; and though God changeth not his mercy, we change our capacity of mercy—cooling more and more, hardening more and more, till old age, with its lethargy and fixed habits, steals on apace, and feeble-mindedness, and sickness, which brings with it the routine of sick-bed attendance, but little or no repentance, no opportunity for new obedience, no space for trying the spirit we are of,—and death to such a penitent becomes a leap in the dark—but, as such penitents are rare or never, death to such procrastinators rivets up the closing avenues of grace, and presents him to the judgment-seat, fixed, finished, and incurable!" pp. 545—7.

We now turn to the "New Monthly Magazine," edited, as we are informed, by the poet CAMPBELL. It will be seen that Mr. Irving's powers are by no means highly appreciated by this critick. He says—

"We have read Mr. Irving's book. It was no slight task, but we positively have read it through. It now and then evinces some power; more however in the way of phrase, and in the accumulation of forcible common-places, than in original conception: but on the whole, we regard it as an imprudent publication, and considered with reference to its main object, which has been very pompously announced, the conversion or exposure of the intellectual classes, as an utter failure. The author appears to us to be a man of a capacity a little above mediocrity. He is, we doubt not, thoroughly versed in the theological doctrines of his church; for this is a matter upon which we do not presume to pronounce. His reading among popular English authors seems to have been tolerably extensive. We also give him credit for the most genuine zeal, notwithstanding the unnecessary tone of exaggeration and defiance with which it is accompanied—but here our commendations must cease. His taste is vicious in the extreme. His style is at once coarse and flashy. It is, in truth, the strangest jumble we have ever encountered. There is no single term by which it can be described. He announces his preference for the models in the days of Milton, but he writes the language of no age. The phraseology of different centuries is often pressed into the service of a single period. We have some quaint turn from the times of Sir Thomas More, puritanical compounds that flourished under Cromwell, followed by a cavalcade of gaudy epithets, bringing down the diction to the day of publication. His affectation of antiquated words is excessive, and quite beneath the dignity of a Christian preacher. Mr. Irving should recollect that *wot* and *wis* and *ween*, and *do* and *doth* and *hath*, upon the latter of which he so delights to ring the changes, are all miserable matters of convention, having nothing in life to do with the objects of his ministry. His death-bed scenes are perhaps among the best.

"And another of a more dark and dauntless mood, who hath braved a thousand terrors, will also make a stand against terror's grisly king—and he will seek his ancient intrepidity, and search for his wonted indifference; and light smiles upon his ghastly visage, and affect levity with his palsied tongue, and parry his rising fears, and wear smoothness on his outward heart, while there is nothing but tossing and uproar beneath. He may expire in the terrible struggle—nature may fail under the unnatural contest; then he dies with desperation imprinted on his clay!

"But if he succeed in keeping the first onset down, then mark how a second and a third comes on as he waxeth feebler. Nature no longer enduring so much, strange and incoherent words burst forth, with now and then a sentence of stern and loud defiance. This escape perceiving, he will gather up his strength and laugh it off as reverie. And then remark him in his sleep—how his countenance suffereth change, and his breast swelleth like the deep; and *his hands grasp for a hold, as if his soul were drowning;* and his lips tremble and mutter, and his breath comes in sighs, or stays with long suppression, like the gusts which precede the bursting storm: and his frame shudders, and shakes the couch on which this awful scene of death is transacted. Ah! these are the ebbings and flowings of strong resolve and strong remorse. That might have been a noble man; but he rejected

all, and chose wickedness, in the face of visitings of God, therefore he is now so severely holden of death.

"And reason doth often resign her seat at the latter end of these God-despisers. Then the eye looks forth from its naked socket, ghastly and wild—terror sits enthroned upon the pale brow—he starts—he thinks that the fiends of hell are already upon him—his disordered brain gives them form and fearful shape—he speaks to them—he craves their mercy. His tender relatives beseech him to be silent, and with words of comfort assuage his terror, and recall him from his paroxysm of remorse. A calm succeeds, until disordered imagination hath recruited strength for a fresh creation of terror; and he dies with a fearful looking-for of judgment, and of fiery indignation to consume him.'

"This is undoubtedly striking; but is it original vigour, or a mere collection of appalling circumstances, which it required little skill to assemble? We have marked in italics the single idea that we did not recognise as common-place.

"We like the following much better. The prevailing sentiment has little novelty, but it is natural and affecting, and is given in better taste. Describing the lukewarmness of modern Christians, and their addiction to worldly enjoyments and pursuits, he proceeds—

"They carry on commerce with all lands, the bustle and noise of their traffic fill the whole earth—they go to and fro, and knowledge is increased—but how few in the hasting crowd are hasting after the kingdom of God! Meanwhile death sweepeth on with his chilling blast, freezing up the life of generations, catching their spirits unblessed with any preparation of peace, quenching hope, and binding destiny for evermore. Their graves are dressed, and their tombs are adorned; but their spirits, where are they? How oft hath this city, where I now write these lamentations over a thoughtless age, been filled and emptied of her people, since first she reared her imperial head! How many generations of her revellers have gone to another kind of revelry!—how many generations of her gay courtiers to a royal residence where courtier-arts are not!—how many generations of her toilsome tradesmen to the place of silence, where no gain can follow them! How time hath swept over her, age after age, with its consuming wave, swallowing every living thing, and bearing it away unto the shores of eternity! The sight and thought of all which is my assurance that I have not in the heat of my feelings surpassed the merit of the case. The theme is fitter for an indignant prophet, than an uninspired sinful man.'

"We cannot forbear extracting one more passage for the singularity, if not the excellence of the style. It is quite in the manner of an ancient Covenanter—

"I would try these flush and flashy spirits with their own weapons, and play a little with them at their own game. They do but prate about their exploits at fighting, drinking, and death despising. I can tell them of those who fought with savage beasts; yea, of maidens who durst enter as coolly as a modern bully into the ring, to take their chance with infuriated beasts of prey; and I can tell them of those who drank the molten lead as cheerfully as they do the juice of the grape, and handled the red fire and played with the bickering flames as they do with love's dimples or woman's amorous tresses. And what do they talk of war? Have they forgot Cromwell's iron band, who made their chivalry to skip? or the Scots Cameronians, who seven times, with their Christian chief, received the thanks of Marlborough, that first of English captains? or Gustavus of the North, whose camp sung psalms in every tent? It is not so long that they should forget Nelson's Methodists, who were the most trusted of that hero's crew. Poor men! they know nothing who do not know out of their country's history, who it was that set at nought the wilfulness of Henry VIII. and the sharp rage of the virgin Queen, against liberty, and bore the black cruelty of her Popish sister; and presented the petition of rights, and the bill of rights, and the claim of rights. Was it chivalry? was it blind bravery? No: these second-rate qualities may do for a pitched field, or a fenced ring; but, when it comes to death or liberty, death or virtue, death or religion, they wax dubious, generally bend their necks under hardships, or turn their backs for a bait of honour, or a mess of solid and substantial meat. This chivalry and brutal bravery can fight if you feed them well and bribe them well, or set them well on an edge; but in the midst of hunger, and nakedness, and want, and persecution, in the day of a country's direst need, they are cowardly, treacherous, and of no avail—Oh! these topers, these gamesters, these idle revellers, these hardened death-despisers!—they are a nation's disgrace, a nation's downfall."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

Mr. Editor,—The following short meditation on the close of the year, presents the thoughts of an individual Christian with reference to his own situation and circumstances, but perhaps they may be useful to many individuals. If you think them likely to have such a tendency, I will thank you to give them a place in the Christian Advocate.

MEDITANS.

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A CHRISTIAN'S MEDITATION ON THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

Another year has taken its flight; it is past and gone forever; it has borne its report to heaven—and before the tribunal there, I am soon to answer for the manner in which I have spent it. Let me therefore review it carefully—with gratitude for the divine goodness, with penitential sorrow for my sins, with a renewed application to the mercy of God in Christ for pardon, and with full purpose of heart, in reliance on divine grace, to live better in time to come than I have ever lived in the time which is past.

My lively gratitude is surely due to the Most High, for the watchful care of his providence over me and mine, through the past year. He has not suffered death to make breaches on *my* family; while thousands of families, as worthy as mine, have either been broken up by death, or dismembered in the most distressing and affecting manner. We have, indeed, not been left wholly without correction. We have had some sickness; but it has been comparatively light and short: and in our sickness, while so many in our land and neighbourhood have suffered under the pressure of the most pinching poverty, along with the most painful disease, we have had every comfort, in food and raiment, friends and physicians, house and home. Who hath made me to differ? The God of providence, I know it is; who of his sovereign goodness has been pleased thus to crown my life with loving kindness and tender mercy. Not unto me, not unto me, O Lord! but to thy name be all the praise. O help me to express my gratitude, not only with my lips, but in my life. Help me to devote, without reserve, the life which thou hast prolonged, and all the means of serving thee which I possess, to thy glory and service. Help me to lead my dear family, whom thou hast mercifully preserved unbroken, to acknowledge thy goodness daily at the family altar: and oh! may thy grace be afforded to them all, to lead them to choose that good part which shall not be taken from them: that when we shall be separated—for I would remember that we must be separated—by death, we may all meet around thy throne above, and there eternally celebrate together, the riches of redeeming love and mercy.

In the year past, the blessings of the gospel, the greatest of all blessings, have been continued to me. I have had free access to God's holy word, which sometimes he has rendered sweet to my taste; yea, "sweeter than honey, and the honeycomb."—In my closet, O my God! thou hast sometimes, I trust, drawn me into near and delightful communion with thyself: the light of thy countenance, which is indeed "the light of life," has been lifted on my soul: I have been able to say, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." Blessed moments! infinitely more to be desired that all the delights of sense. I have indeed had my doubts, and fears, and temptations, and conflicts. But God, "my shepherd," has still preserved me. He has delivered me out of the snare of the fowler; has "restored my soul, and led me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." In my family, and in the publick assemblies of his saints, I have had opportunity to worship God, and to hear the dispensation of the gospel of his grace. I have been

permitted to go to the table of the Lord, there to renew my covenant vows, and to commune with Him and with his dear people, in the affecting symbols of his broken body and shed blood. Precious ordinances! Blessed be the name of the Lord, that I can say, that in the year past I have been fed and refreshed, from the provisions of his house and his table. For these spiritual mercies in Christ Jesus, I would desire to be supremely thankful. "Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me bless his holy name, and forget not all his benefits."

But alas! in the review of the past year, I see much to bewail. I have often been sadly formal and cold in the performance of religious duties—yea, my mind has sometimes wandered to worldly objects, and been distracted with vain imaginations, when it ought to have had all its powers engrossed with the sacred and sublime service in which I was engaged. Oh! how humble and thankful ought I to be, when I think of the goodness of God, who has not left me wholly to myself, as the just reward of my folly and imperfection—nay, even my profaneness, in the performance of holy duties. Let me watch, and pray, and strive, against the repetition of this evil. Thanks to God, who has preserved me from outbreaking sins, which would have dishonoured his cause, and sorely wounded my own peace. Alas! I have heard in the year past of many instances of scandalous sins, among the professors of religion—of some instances of the kind among those who occupied conspicuous stations in the church. It is sovereign grace alone that has preserved me. May I keep in mind continually the warning of inspiration—"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The Lord grant that I may die before I bring a reproach on his name and cause. But though preserved from flagitious transgressions, alas! how many sins, both of heart and life, do I perceive in the year past. How little spiritual, have I been, in the *habitual* state of my mind; how inordinately have my affections been placed on earthly objects; how seldom have they risen to God, and centered on him as my chief good; how imperfect has been the performance of all the duties which I owe both to God and man; how deficient have I been in an edifying example before my family, and in my endeavours to promote the eternal well being of my children and domesticks; how little have I done to promote religion among my friends and neighbours, and to advance the great plans of Christian benevolence which are now in execution; how much less have I done, than I might, to relieve human suffering in all its forms, and to promote human happiness, in the various ways in which it may be advanced; how much of my precious time has been unprofitably spent.—Let me be humbled in the dust, on this review of my innumerable sins and imperfections. Gracious God! I confess before thee that I am an unprofitable servant. I acknowledge my manifold omissions and transgressions. "God be merciful to me a sinner." I fly to the blood of cleansing. O may I be truly "washed, and sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of my God." And grant me, heavenly Father, those supplies of thy grace by which I shall be disposed and enabled hereafter, to spend my time better than I have heretofore done—more to thy glory, more to the benefit of others, more to my own spiritual improvement and growth in holiness. Help me henceforth to adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour, and to promote his cause, by a better example than I have ever yet exhibited, and by better exertions than I have ever yet made. And all this I resolve, in an humble reliance on thy all-sufficient and effectual aid. Aided by Thee, it is now my solemn purpose and resolution, to endeavour to spend the coming year to better purpose than any year of my life hitherto. I would remember that I am a year nearer to my last account; and that in the one

on which I am about to enter, I may be called to render that account to my final Judge, and to receive his award for eternity. Oh! may I live constantly as a candidate for heaven. May my heart and my treasure be there: may my affections and thoughts be much and often there: may I be vigilant and active in performing every duty that is incumbent on me; and do all, as remembering that the night of death cometh in which no man can work. May I live this year as I would if I knew it was the last of life—doing as much for the glory of God and the good of my fellow men, as if I assuredly knew that I was to pass into eternity at, or before, the close of the year. O Lord most merciful! strengthen me to perform what I purpose. I cast myself on Thee—on thy grace to help me, on thy providence to protect me, on thy care to provide for me: guide me till I die; be my support in death, and the eternal portion of my soul.—Amen.

Review.

LETTERS ON THE ETERNAL GENERATION OF THE SON OF GOD, BY PROFESSOR STUART—LETTERS ON THE ETERNAL SONSHIP OF CHRIST, BY PROFESSOR MILLER.

(*Concluded from p.* 514.)

The *second* argument of Dr. M. is founded on the phrase *Son of God*, used by the New Testament writers, viewed in connexion with the sense in which this phrase was used under the Old Testament economy. In constructing this argument, he quotes a number of passages in the New Testament, to show the exalted sense in which this title was applied to our Saviour. He then observes, that this title was used by our Saviour and others, in a way so familiar, as manifested that its import was well understood; and he proves from a number of learned writers, that it was familiarly used by the Jews, in our Lord's time, in reference to the Messiah, and known by them to designate a divine person; and that their use of it was not, and could not be, grounded either on his miraculous conception, or on his resurrection. From these premises he draws the conclusion, that the phrase in question, is manifestly used by the New Testament writers to designate the *divine and eternal Sonship* of Jesus Christ.

In the course of this argument, Dr. M. adverts to the construction put by the Jews on the use of this title by our Lord. They accused him of blasphemy; alleging, that by calling himself the Son of God, he made himself equal with God. This fact Dr. M., justly, we think, considers as evidence that they actually did believe this title imported what they affirmed it did. His opponent however, contends, that their interpretation is to be set down to a malignant opposition to Christ, which impelled them wilfully to misrepresent the meaning of his words. We have not room to cite Dr. M.'s reply; we shall only remark, that if the Jews did not then so understand the signification of this title, it seems hardly possible for a people, who knew that their sacred writers called angels sons of God, and magistrates gods, and that the Most High called Israel his son, and, on the supposition on which we reason, must have known that this very title denoted not a *divine* but a *human* person, to have given to it an import so totally at variance with all their former ideas and language about it. Indeed, on this supposition, it seems almost impossible for such a construction to have entered into their minds.

Dr. Miller's *third* argument rests upon scripture passages, which represent the Father as *not sparing his Son; —giving his Son;—sending forth his Son*, &c. From such expressions he infers, that Christ was a *Son* before he was given, before he was sent into the world.

Aware of the force of this argument, Professor S. endeavours to destroy it. A part of Dr M.'s reply shall be cited:

"You say (p. 143.) that in the New Testament, the modes of expression referred to,—*coming into the world—sent into the world*—'are often used in the sense of *entering upon the duties of any publick office.*' And you exemplify your meaning by the case of *John* the Baptist. *There was a man sent from God.* Here you appear to me to have entirely lost sight of the point of the argument. This case of *John* serves my purpose admirably. *There was a man sent from God.* Was he not a *man* BEFORE he was sent forth? Or did he *become* a man—was he *constituted* a man, *by* entering on the duties of his publick office? Your other example, from 'Rabinnick usage,' answers my purpose just as well. '*The master has come,*' you say, means, according to that usage, that the master *teaches* or *is teaching*. But this, surely, does not imply that he is not a master or a teacher *previously* to his entering the apartment in which his pupils convene, for the purpose of being taught; or that it is by the *act* of teaching that his character as such is constituted. If you were to be told that a society in the United States had *sent* a well qualified and experienced teacher of languages or of science to *India*, would you not suppose that he had borne this character before he went? or, would you rather suppose that his mission created this character? Unless you can suppose the latter, I must believe that all the examples which you draw from the scriptures or from 'Rabinnick usage,' make, most decisively for my doctrine, and not for yours."

The turn given by Dr. M. to the comparisons of Mr. S., is happy. Yet we are disposed to admit, that the expressions in question should always be interpreted according to the subject and circumstances. Were it said that God *gave* Moses, and *sent him* into the world, as a blessing to mankind, no person could infer from this mode of speech that Moses had an existence before he was born. But were it said that God *sent* the angel Gabriel to announce the Saviour's conception, every body would immediately associate with the sending of him the idea of his previous angelick existence. In like manner when it is said that God *gave* his Son, and *sent* his Son; as this divine person certainly had a previous existence, the act of giving and of sending, ought manifestly to be referred to his previous existence, as well as to his birth into the world, and entrance on his office.

If this will not convince our Andover friend, he ought, we think, to bow to an inspired interpretation of these expressions. Contrasting himself with his Master, the Baptist says, "he that *cometh from above*, is above all; he that is of the *earth*, speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from *heaven*, is above all. For he whom God hath *sent*, speaketh the words of God.—The Father loveth the *Son*, &c." John iii. 31—35. Hear our Lord's own interpretation: "Then Jesus said, *my Father* giveth you the true bread from *heaven*. For the bread of God is he which *cometh down from heaven*, and giveth life to the world.—I am the bread of life. All that the *Father* giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. For I *came down from heaven*, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that *sent* me. And this is the *Father's* will that *sent* me.—And this is the will of him that *sent* me, that every one that seeth the *Son*, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life." John. vi. 32—40. It is a little unfortunate that Professor Stuart's interpretation accords too well with the language of the Jews, "who murmured at" our Lord, "because he said, I am the bread of life which *came down from heaven*. And they said, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then, that he saith, *I came down from heaven?*" verses 41, 42. Symbolizing in this particular with the Jews, the worthy Andoverian Professor says, "The Son of

God was born of the Virgin Mary, and he entered on his office after his birth; how then can the expressions, God *gave his Son,—sent his Son,* and *his Son's coming into the world,* —signify his previous existence, and that he came down from heaven?"

Dr. M.'s *fourth* argument, grounded on the great stress laid on the Father's wonderful condescension and love in not sparing his Son, his *only Son,* &c., is very interesting and forcible. We shall not attempt to abbreviate it; but only remark, that, in our opinion, it seems perfectly obvious, if the title *Son of God,* were not one of the highest that can be given to Christ, a different title, one expressive of his divine character, would have been used by the inspired writers in all those passages in which they design to set forth to view the astonishing love of God in bestowing on the world his unspeakable gift.

Of the *fifth and sixth* arguments no compendious view can be given. From the last, however, we select the following remarks:

"I know that this fact does not prove that either of these doctrines is true and scriptural; but certainly it proves so much;—that denying the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of Christ, is not a mere insulated point in theology; that it bears extensive and by no means uninteresting relations; that it breaks up a system; that it invades pretty seriously the matter, as well as the phraseology, of established creeds; and that it leaves us without any titles or language which seem adapted to express close and endearing RELATION between the Persons of the ever blessed Trinity. Whether this consideration has been, in all cases, sufficiently weighed, I will not undertake to say. But I will say, that it strikes me as a very important consideration; that it presents, to my view, a very serious barrier, which, if I were proceeding in your course, I should consider myself as bound fairly to surmount, before I could feel at full liberty to go forward."

Dr. Miller's *seventh* argument embraces a number of passages that teach "the doctrine of the eternal sonship of Christ." The chief texts are Prov. viii. 22—31. John i. 14. Rom. i. 3, 4. Heb. i. 2; iii. 5, 6; v. 8. The argument founded on the last text we shall present to the reader

"*Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.*— The whole spirit and force of this passage evidently lies in the assumed fact, that the Sonship of the Redeemer naturally elevated him above the obligation of obedience: that, as Son, he was not called or bound to obey, being above it: that he voluntarily condescended to be *made under the law,* which originally had no claim upon him. On his own account, no such obedience was necessary or required of him; but for our sake he learned it, and submitted to it. But if the Sonship of Christ consist merely in his office as Mediator, then the statement of the apostle will amount to neither more nor less than this: That, though he were Mediator, yet he learned the proper and stipulated duty of a Mediator. In other words, though he bore the office, YET he learned to perform its duties. Or, still more briefly, though he *was* Mediator, yet he *acted* as Mediator. Can we suppose that a sober and inspired apostle would speak thus? I confess, for myself, as long as this text remains on the sacred page, I must continue to believe that the Filiation of the Saviour is Divine and eternal."

Dr. Miller prosecutes his investigation of the testimony of scripture in his *fourth* letter, and makes many judicious remarks on Mr. Stuart's views and interpretation of certain texts of scripture.

"I am perplexed," he observes, "by your appearing to maintain SEVERAL DIFFERENT FILIATIONS. You seem to me to speak of at least *three.* You speak of a *literal* Sonship, when the Saviour became incarnate, or was born of the Virgin, according to the flesh; of a *figurative* Sonship, on account of his office as Messiah; and in one place, as it appears to me, of *another figurative* Sonship, founded on his rising from the dead, and thus 'entering on a new life;' on a restored, reanimated existence.

"If I mistake not, this plan of tracing the title of *Son* to SEVERAL SOURCES, is of Unitarian origin, and one which, until a comparatively late period, was confined to *Arians* and *Socinians,* and a few Socinianizing *Remonstrants.* This fact itself is a circumstance of rather suspicious character. But is it so, that the Sonship of Christ is a complex, multiform, *gradual* thing? Is it really so, that it was *begun* at one time, and not *completed* until a number of years afterwards? This view of the subject, I acknowledge, has to me a most singular and incredible appearance. We

are told, indeed, that Christ, as to his human nature, *increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*, *Luke*, ii. 52; but I have no recollection of ever having read in scripture, of his increasing in his *Sonship*. That blessed and ineffable relation admitted, indeed, of different *evidences*, and of progressive *manifestations*; but not, I should think, of different progressive stages, as to its *essence*, or that which *constitutes* it what it is. If we take our illustration from any other known case of sonship, either in the Bible, or out of it, we shall find that this relation, however it may be evinced, is constituted by some single event, to the exclusion of all others. Such is the creed which I embrace. I suppose that the Sonship of Christ has been *manifested* in various ways; but that the relation itself is one and eternal."

In regard to the approximation of Professor Stuart's views towards *Tritheism*, he says—

"You appear to me to maintain that if the *Logos* be God, equal with the Father, he must be a completely *separate*, *independent* Being, and that each Person of the adorable Trinity, must be possessed of a separate and complete divine character, independently of the other two. But, as I hinted in a preceding letter, I cannot perceive how this can be maintained without believing in three Gods. Bishop *Horsley* speaks of 'certain injudicious antagonists of *Sabellius*, who, to avoid his error, divided the Holy Trinity into three persons *unrelated* to each other, and *distinct in all respects*. These, he observes, *Dionysius Romanus* condemned, and *Athanasius* quotes his censure with approbation; as well, the Bishop adds, he might; for the opinion of three Persons in the Godhead, *unrelated to each other*, and *distinct in all respects*, is rank *Tritheism*; because what are unrelated and distinct in all respects, are many in all respects, and being many in all respects, cannot in any respect be one.'*

"As I understand this subject, the three Persons of the blessed Trinity *together* constitute One self-existent, independent, and infinitely perfect God. Each of the Persons is to be considered as equally and completely possessing the same Divine Essence and perfections; but surely we cannot say, that each Person possesses in himself complete, separate, and independent Divinity; for if we could, then each Person would be a perfect God, independently of the other two; and of course, might exist with every infinite perfection without them. Whereas, we suppose that the three Persons are essential to the perfect and independent Godhead; that the Godhead could not be what it is, if either Person was wanting; and, consequently, that no One of them can be said to be, (speaking after the manner of men) *absolutely independent of the other two*. Yet you say, (p. 92.) 'the *Logos* is really and verily divine, self-existent, uncaused, immutable *in himself*.' Now, I suppose, the phrase '*in himself*,' must mean, as *distinguished from*, or *independently of*, the Father, and the Holy Ghost. If this be true of the *Logos*, it is also true of each of the other Persons. But if this be so, are there not three Gods?"

The objection of Mr. S. to the import of the term *Son*, is well retorted:

"It appears to me that the term *Logos*, or *Word*, is quite as expressive of *derivation* and *posteriority* as the term *Son* can be said to be; and quite as liable to *objection* on this account. I may resort to the same mode of metaphysical reasoning with respect to this title, to which you resort in reference to the title of Son: and if so, I should say, the term *Word* signifies something *uttered* or *spoken*. But the *speaker* must be conceived of as always existing before the word spoken by him. Therefore to speak of an eternal Word, is a contradiction in terms. I do not admit this method of reasoning; but it is *your* method. And if you object to the term *Son*, as expressive of an eternal relation, on this ground, I see not but that you must, on precisely the same principle, discard the term *Word*, as designating an eternal and necessary Person of the adorable Trinity."

In the *same manner* it might be shown, that the term *Logos*, or *Word*, implies a *cause* of the existence of the Logos, and consequently that he cannot be *self-existent*.

We could wish to select more from this letter; but as our review must be limited, we forbear. One passage, however, from Mr. S., that appears in this letter (p. 136), we shall transcribe for the purpose of making a remark: "Who then," observes the Professor, "made expiation by suffering for our sins? Surely the Messiah, and not the eternal Logos. The same *person*, then, is the irradiation of the Father's glory, and his peculiar image." Does Mr. S. believe that the Messiah is not the

* Tracts in controversy with *Priestley*, p. 97.

Logos? Are they not the *same* person, but *two* persons? If the Messiah is not a *divine person*, we are yet in our sins. The Professor no doubt believes that Christ is truly God; and on this account we could not refrain from remarking on this incautious language, into which he is betrayed by a wish to support his interpretation of a particular passage, Heb. i. 3.

Dr. Miller, we think, has been unnecessarily afraid of using the term *derivation*. In our opinion it is no more inconsistent with the real Godhead of Jesus Christ, than the term *Son*, or *communication;* and that it can be as easily separated from every idea of *inferiority* or *dependence* as the other terms. Indeed the subject to which it is applied necessarily requires such a separation. For when it is said Christ derived the *divine nature* from the Father, we do not make him inferior to the Father; because the nature which it is affirmed he derived, is that *identical* nature of the Father, which is *eternal, self-existent*, and *independent*. When it is considered that Christ is not only called the *Son* of God, but that the terms *begotten* and *generation* are applied to his divine filiation, it seems to us that the word *derived* is not inapplicable; and that it conveys an idea involved in Christ's sonship, which Dr. M. has not expressed in his second letter, in which he states the doctrine he intends to support; though it is incidently brought out in the course of discussion, and pretty plainly in p. 261, where he quotes with approbation a passage from the learned Stapfer, who says the Father *communicated* his essence to the Son.

Professor S. indeed affirms, p. 93, that the idea of *derivation* is utterly inconsistent with *supreme* divinity; and so we should affirm, were we to understand what he understands by the term, that is, a *dependent created* nature. Here we apprehend may be discovered his *radical error*, which has interwoven itself with all his speculations, and given a colouring to all his interpretations of scripture passages. He *will* attribute to the term *derived*, when applied to the *Son of God*, the *same* idea that it has, when applied to a *creature*. He has not yet learned to separate from terms used in reference to the *divine nature*, the imperfection and dependence that belong to them when used in reference to *created natures*. He will insist that we make the Logos a *derived being*, when we only affirm that his *nature* was derived; and that he, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is the *Supreme Being*. Words originally intended to express created things must be purified from all imperfection, and exalted in their meaning, when applied to the infinite Jehovah. The Andover Professor himself, with all his noble ideas of the spirituality of the divine nature, would find his language betraying the grossness of *materialism*, if not explained by this necessary rule; for in the very passage to which we refer, he speaks of "the *radical principle*, an *elementary ingredient*, of his (Logos') true and proper divinity." Now, trying these expressions by the rule he applies to the expressions of the advocates of the eternal sonship of Christ, we might ask, is the divine nature *compounded*—compounded too of *material elements*—compounded of different *elementary ingredients?* The reader will perceive that the Professor cannot use language that does not need being purified from the dross of earthly ideas, even when he touches a point of peculiar interest, and when censuring the terms of others as unbecoming the spirituality and independence of the Supreme Being.

Dr. Miller, we have seen, has well shown that the term *Logos*, which we translate *word, reason*, or *wisdom*, implies *derivation*, as really as *Son*. For certainly there can be no word, reason, or wisdom, in the sense in which they are used with reference to creatures, till after the existence of the creature from whom speech, reason, or wisdom must pro-

ceed. We think, therefore, that Professor S. in the use of the term Logos, to which he erroneously supposes that the idea of derivation does not attach, gets rid of none of the difficulties which he seems so anxious to avoid. And Dr. M. himself appears to us not only unnecessarily, but inconsistently, to be at so much pains to escape from the word *derivation*, since it is plain that the terms that are used on both sides imply it, when taken in their common acceptation. In a word, nothing in our opinion can be more evident, than that all the terms used in this controversy, by both parties, to designate the second person in the adorable Trinity, must be taken in a *peculiar* sense, a sense which will not imply *priority* in the order of existence, or of time, in any of the persons in the sacred Three; and that the terms, when thus taken, may be used with propriety, and without an extreme and fastidious scrupulousness. Nor is it true, as has often been insinuated, that we can have no *distinct ideas* of things that imply a priority in the order of *nature*, and no priority in the order of *time*. On the contrary a distinction of this kind is as old as the science of dialectic itself; and is manifestly just, and capable of undeniable exemplification. Thus, in the order of nature, but not of time, fire is before heat, a luminous body before light, a fluid body before fluidity, and a mathematical proposition before its corollaries. These are the very illustrations that have been used in regard to this subject. Let it be observed that we mention them simply to show that we do not talk without ideas, when we say that the terms *sonship* and *derivation*, in the high and peculiar sense in which we use them in reference to this subject, may imply *co-existence*, in the party to whom they relate, with God the eternal Father. But we do not mention them as affording an *explanation* of the *mode* of that co-existence. We solemnly protest against being so understood or represented. The mode of co-existence we have no belief will ever be understood by the human mind in the present state. Perhaps, indeed, it transcends, and will for ever transcend, the intellect even of angels. "Who by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection?"

In his last letter Professor S. endeavours to show that the rejection of the eternal sonship of Christ, has no tendency to Unitarianism; but Professor M. in his last letter, expresses his fears in regard to those who deny this important doctrine, and assigns his reasons for believing that this error in the creed of our brethren will lead to errors of a more dangerous kind.

On the whole, we congratulate the American church on the publication of an excellent popular exhibition, in an English dress, of the arguments that prove the *eternal sonship* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

J.

Literary and Philosophical Intelligence.

From the London Courier of October 18.

North-West Expedition—Authentic particulars.—Capt. Parry arrived this morning at the Admiralty, having landed at Whithy, whence his majesty's ships *Fury* and *Hecla* were continuing their way to the river Thames.

The public regret that Capt. Parry has not been able to accomplish the north-west passage, will be amply compensated by the general pleasure which will be felt at the safe return of this gallant officer and his brave companions.

In 1821, the expedition explored Repulse Bay, Sir Thomas Roe's Welcome, Middleton's Frozen Strait, and that neighbourhood, and finding no passage to the northward and westward, wintered in the southern bay of an island, called Winter Island, in lat. 66, 11, long. 83.

In 1822, the expedition, guided and encouraged by the information they had received during the winter, from a party of Esquimaux, with whom they had established a friendly intercourse, pursued their attempt to the northward, and examined all inlets towards the west, till they arrived at a strait which separates the north-west coast of America from what Capt. Parry considers to be clusters of islands, extending northward towards the scene of his former voyage.

The great object of ascertaining the northern limit of the continent being thus accomplished, Capt. Parry penetrated two degrees to the westward with considerable expectation of final success; but in a narrow part of the strait, he found the ice fixed in that peculiar manner which indicates that it is *perpetual, and not separated in any season, or under any circumstances.* The expedition was therefore obliged to winter in latitude 69, 20, longitude 81, 50.

In the summer of this year, finding the ice still fixed to the shores, in such a manner as precluded all hope of any further progress in the neighbourhood in which he was, Capt. Parry thought it advisable to give up the attempt and return to England.

The expedition has lost by illness, only Mr. Fyffe, the Greenland master, and three seamen, and one man killed by an accident.

Brewster's Philosophical Journal, for October, announces that our countryman, Mr. Perkins, has succeeded in crystallizing acetic acid by the pressure of 1000 atmospheres. The transparent crystals thus formed are pure acid; and the residuum is acidulous water. Mr. Perkins has crystallized several other acids by the same means. He has, also, compressed atmospheric air to such a degree, that a small portion of fluid appears at the end of the compressed column. This fluid does not wholly recover its gaseous state, when the pressure is removed. It was supposed to be water, but this is not certain. Several other gases have been converted into liquids, by the same powerful agency.

It has been ascertained in France that the heat given out during the slaking of lime is sufficient to fire gunpowder.

The Niger.—We have the greatest satisfaction in announcing that three enterprising Englishmen, Dr. Oudenay, Major Denham, and Lieut. Clapperton, who left London on the above interesting and hazardous expedition, under the authority of government, in 1821, arrived at Bornou, in the centre of the continent of Africa, in February last, and were exceedingly well received by the Sultan of that kingdom. The doctor is to remain at Bornou, as British vice consul, while the other parties pursue their inquiries as to the course of this long sought river.

Chemical Discovery.—M. Dobereiner, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Jena, gives an account of a discovery of the greatest importance. By a series of entirely new experiments, he has ascertained that platina, the heaviest of all elementary substances, when reduced into very fine particles, produces, by simple contact with hydrogen gas, (the lightest of elementary substances), an electrical or dynamic combination, which, if brought into contact with hydrogen gas, or with atmospheric air, instantly dissolves itself, yielding fire and water. To prove this important fact by a brilliant experiment, M. Dobereiner makes hydrogen pass from a reservoir, by a capillary tube, curved below, upon pure platina in powder, which is confined in a glass tunnel, hermetically sealed at the point, so that the gas mingles with the atmospheric air before it touches the platina. The moment that the current of gas reaches the surface of platina, the powder of that metal becomes red and burning, and this phenomenon continues as long as the stream of gas is directed upon it. This fine discovery will open a new field for physical and chemical researches.

From experiments made at Portsmouth, by Lieut. C. Morton, R. N., it appears that by artificially augmenting the surfaces of the hands and feet, the art of swimming is susceptible of being much facilitated. The apparatus which he has lately employed, and which, from its use, and facility, and similarity of application, he denominates "Marine propelling Gloves and Slippers," is said to possess considerable buoyancy, and while it enables the wearer to exert his strength to the best advantage as long as he retains any, it would still tend to support him if totally exhausted.

Sir Everard Home has recently made some inquiries by way of comparison between the auricular organs of men and quadrupeds. The result of his researches seems to prove that shrill tones, or the upper notes of an instrument, have comparatively little effect in exciting the attention of animals, whilst the full lower tones stimulate them almost to fury. Sir Everard observes, "that the effect of the high notes of the piano forte upon the great lion in Exeter Change, only called his attention, which was considerable, though he remained silent and motionless. But no sooner were the flat, or lower notes, sounded, than he sprung up, lashed his tail, and yelled violently, and endeavoured to break loose; and became

altogether so furious, as to alarm the spectators present. This violent excitement ceased with the discontinuance of the music. The deep tones of the French horn also produced a similar effect with the lower tones of the piano forte, on the elephant, and other animals on which the experiment was made."

Trenton, (N. J.) Nov. 15.

Delaware and Passaic Canal.—We were present at an exposition of the route of this canal, by Mr. M'Culloch, before a committee of the Legislature, last Monday evening. Many interesting facts relative to its importance were developed. It appears the route of the canal embraces a great extent of country abundantly rich in mineral substances. Immense mines of iron, copperas, lime and zinc, lie in its vicinity—it passes 90 iron furnaces, 40 of which are in ruins for want of fuel, which can be supplied by the canal. It is proposed to start it directly opposite the Lehigh, whence the coal is derived. Its cost is estimated at $800,000; and the revenue it would yield confidently estimated at $250,000.

[*Emporium.*

Return of Major Long's Exploring Party.—We have conversed with some of the gentlemen who have lately returned from the north-west expedition under Major Long, and are pleased to find that they have accomplished all the objects of their journey. These were altogether of a scientifick nature: to explore the country; ascertain its geography and topography; investigate its natural history, and inquire into the dispositions, numbers, languages, modes of subsistence, &c. of the various tribes of Indians. The travellers set out from Philadelphia on the 30th April last, and completed the enterprise in a period of somewhat less than six months, having made a circuit of between four and five thousand miles, the greater part of which was through wildernesses.

[*Nat. Gaz.*

Improvement in Paving Streets.—There are few persons who either reside in cities or visit them from the country, who would not rejoice at the success of a plan, which should relieve them from the racket of carriages and carts driving through the streets. A better plan than the one now followed, of paving the road with rounded pebbles, we have no doubt may be devised. The ancients appear to have constructed better roads than we: the Appian way, which every body has heard of, was constructed of large square blocks of stone (probably granite), and which, for safety, convenience, and durability, has never been surpassed. We give the following extract of a letter to show that this subject is receiving attention in Europe, and we hope their example will be followed here.

Extract from a Letter, dated London, Sept. 13, 1823.

London is improving very fast. They are now making trial of a plan, which has been successfully employed in some other places, of paving the streets with a composition made of cracked stones. If this answers as well here, as it has elsewhere, and there seems to be no reason why it should not, it will make an incalculable saving in the wear of horses, carriages, the facility of repairs, opening and closing drains, aqueducts and gas tubes; besides being more economical in the first cost; diminishing the noise, and materially lessening the number of accidents.

To Extinguish Chimnies on Fire.—It has always been a desirable object in cities, to extinguish the burning soot in chimnies, said to be on fire, and many plans have been adopted for this purpose. A common one is to throw a handful of common salt in the fire which is on the hearth—the efficacy of this expedient is no doubt owing to the liberation of the muriatic acid gas, from the salt by the heat—this passing up the chimney, extinguishes the fire. A better plan however has lately been devised, and successfully practised in Europe. It is done by burning some brimstone on the hearth instead of the salt. The following experiment has been made in proof of the excellency of the plan:—A considerable bundle of dry wood and shavings was set on fire near the upper end of the chimney, and immediately after a small quantity of sulphur kindled on the hearth below, the sulphurous fumes quickly rose up through the flue and instantly extinguished the flames.

Religious Intelligence.

After we had made our selections of religious intelligence for the present month, we received the London "Evangelical Magazine" for October; and in the "Missionary Chronicle," which accompanies that work, we found communications of a very interesting nature, from the Sandwich

Isles, which have not as yet been published in this country. A portion of these communications, therefore, we have resolved to give at present, and to reserve to the following month some domestick intelligence, of an interesting kind, which we had previously selected. It will be observed that the "American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," have received intelligence from the Sandwich Islands, of about the same date with this, which was sent to the "London Missionary Society." Hence one passage, which is inserted in the Missionary Herald for November, is also found in the communications to the London Society.

PACIFIC OCEAN.

19*th September*. Letters have this day been received from the Sandwich Islands. We have stopped the printing of the Chronicle to insert the following interesting communications from Mr. Ellis, who, with his family, has returned safe to Oahu.

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SANDWICH ISLANDS.

Oahu, March 10, 1823.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—Capt. CHANDLER, of the Pearl, being about to sail for America, I very gladly avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded, to acquaint you with our arrival here on the 5th of February last, after a safe and comfortable passage of five weeks from the Society Islands. We approached these shores, destined to be the scene of our future exertions in the great Redeemer's cause, with feelings of peculiar interest and delight. On landing, we were kindly received by our dear brethren and sisters, the American Missionaries, who have hospitably entertained us beneath their friendly roof, till provided with a house to go into. The king and chiefs also greeted our arrival with pleasure, and seemed to have been waiting for our return, according to our promise made on a former visit, in company with the deputation.

I was happy to find the good work had gone on more encouragingly since our departure. The king and principal chiefs of all the islands we found very favourably disposed towards the religion of Jesus Christ, and diligent in the use of the means of instruction, several of them having made a very respectable proficiency in reading and writing, being able to write intelligibly and read the small spelling-book published in their language. The Sabbath-day is kept as a holy day by all the chiefs and many of the people, who to a great degree abstain from labour, barter, and other worldly occupations. Every Saturday night, Mr. Pitt* sends the king's crier round to proclaim throughout every part of the village, that the morrow is the sacred day, that they must not plant their gardens, build houses, make canoes, beat cloth, sell sandal wood, shoot birds, or follow any of their games or play, but go to the place of worship and hear the word of God! Few public criers have such commissions! We have very good congregations on the Sabbath days, and also on Wednesday evenings; frequently about one thousand attend, though not more than five hundred can be accommodated inside the chapel; but this is not perhaps one-fifth of the population of the village of Honoruru, where for several Sabbaths past we have had a meeting in the evening, either at the king's large house or in one of the public school houses, which is in general well attended. Messrs. Bingham, Thurston, and myself, each share in the labours of preaching, which enables us to be more extensively useful; and we sometimes have preaching in two different places at the same time. The work of teaching goes on pleasingly, though not so rapidly as we could wish. The arrival of the missionaries from America will render very considerable aid to this department of labour. Auna, whom we left here on our former visit, is actively engaged in teaching the people to read, and, together with his wife, exerts, we believe, a very favourable influence over the people at large. Taua, the native teacher we have brought with us this time from Huahine, is, by the chief's request, attached to the king's mother and her connexions, to teach them to read and write. The king's mother and her husband are chiefs of considerable influence, and are very friendly; we trust, Taua and his wife will be of great service to them. We receive almost daily applications for books; as the edition lately printed is found inadequate to the demands of the people, the brethren intend soon to print another edition, adding sixteen pages, which will render it a very useful little book.

Ever since we have arrived here, my time has been most completely taken up with the immediate concerns of the mission, so much so, that I could not even attend to the landing of our things from the ship. The regular meetings in the place of worship and in the village, the

* Karaimoku, the King's Prime Minister, so called.

attendance on the king, which he daily expects when employed at his desk, conversing with the chiefs from house to house, occasionally acting as interpreter for the king or some of the captains in harbour, &c. who have business to transact with him, sometimes detain me from home from early in the morning till late in the evening. The numerous and various duties that every day devolve upon us, are fast augmenting, and pressing more heavily, which directs us continually to look to Him, through whose grace and strength alone we can accomplish the work given us to do. The climate is, I think, more congenial to our constitutions than that of the Society Islands. I have had my health better ever since our first visit, though Mrs. Ellis has had two very severe attacks since our arrival. The air is cool and bracing, and the weather to *us* seems very cold. The village in the vicinity of which we live is very populous, containing probably between five and six thousand inhabitants, besides foreigners, of which at times there are considerable numbers. There are about sixteen merchants, including the American consul, who reside here constantly, to transact business with the natives and with the shipping that are continually arriving. Honoruru, possessing the most convenient harbour of any of the islands, is a place of very considerable commerce; sixteen large vessels have arrived during the short period that we have been here, most of them whalers, who put in for refreshments; among them are two English ships, viz. the Indispensable, Captain Brooks, and the Princess Mary, Captain Clark, both of London.

The great population, and the very frequent arrivals of vessels, which generally want fresh supplies of provisions, firewood, &c. render those articles very dear. The common price for a hog is from six to ten dollars. Potatoes are about one and a half dollar per bushel; firewood, ten sticks per dollar, and other articles in proportion. A dollar a day is also the common price of labour, though the natives sometimes work for less. Every article of clothing is also very dear, being first taken from England to America, and brought from thence to these Islands, except so much as is brought from China. A hundred per cent. on the American or China price, is the lowest rate at which they are ever disposed of here; but I hope we shall receive a sufficiency for our family from England, which will save a considerable expense. It is very likely we could be supported for half the amount in any of the other islands; but I think that will not be considered a sufficient reason for our removing from this: Oahu being the residence of the king, the seat of government, the abode of all the principal chiefs of the other islands, and of most of the persons of influence in the whole group. The King and Queen of Tauai, the Governor of Maui, several Chiefs of Hawaii, as well as the king and Mr. Pitt, make this the place of their constant residence. It is also probably the station at which many of the elementary and other books in the language will be prepared and printed, and the translation of the scriptures carried on. Some of the chiefs have expressed their wishes that we should remove to Maui, or Hawaii, but the king and Karaimoku, with some others, wish us to remain. The American brethren are also decidedly of opinion that this is the station where our aid is most needed, and where we can most effectually advance the common cause. Thus Providence seems to point out this as the station we should occupy. However, I shall be happy to receive the opinion and advice of the directors, as to my continuing here, or removing to some of the adjacent islands.

Very considerable expense will be saved by the directors sending out supplies from England, particularly articles of clothing and barter; among the latter, knives, scissors, axes, and files, together with printed cottons and calicoes, coarse and cheap, are the most useful. I shall be much obliged if by the earliest opportunity the directors will send out a close cooking-stove, one sufficient for a family, and to consume at the same time the smallest quantity of fuel. It is an essential in this part of the world. It will soon repay its cost by saving fire-wood, which is perhaps the most expensive article in domestic economy. It costs the mission family about 14 dollars per month, for this article exclusively. They have lately purchased a vessel for 400 dollars, principally for the fuel it will furnish. I have written to Mr. Marsden for a stove, but it is not probable he will be able to procure one; however, should he send one, it will have saved its cost by the time one arrives from London, and will always be worth more than it cost. I regret exceedingly that our necessary expenses here should be so much greater than in the Society Islands; but I take this early opportunity of assuring the directors, that the strictest regard to economy, and to saving as much as possible the funds of the society, will invariably influence my conduct, both in putting up our dwelling, and procuring food and clothing. I trust, that after the first year, the expense of our support here will be very considerably diminished. The very extensive good to this nation, which our

residence among them seems calculated to produce, will, I hope, counterbalance the expensiveness of the place.

I feel very much the loss of the libraries of the brethren in the Society Islands; I have brought with me but a very inadequate stock to aid me in the work before me. Any benevolent individuals who may feel interested in the advancement of the moral and intellectual improvement in Christian instruction of this people, would render no inconsiderable aid by donations and books. Those on history and philology, together with any critical works on the sacred scriptures, particularly on the Old Testament, would be most valuable.

A very considerable reinforcement of labourers is almost daily expected from America, among whom there will be perhaps five preachers; but it will be some time before they will be able to speak to the people; and even were they able to begin their labours immediately on landing, the field is wider than they could occupy. The population is stated at 150,000 in all the islands, probably it exceeds a hundred thousand, to all of whom a preacher has now free access; but to many, even when additional aid shall arrive, only occasional visits can be paid, and those probably at distant intervals. It appears very desirable, should brother and sister Williams' indisposition render it necessary for them to quit the Society Islands, that they should remove hither before they finally depart for England. I think the climate such as would restore them to health, and allow them to remain on the field, (an object I know to be dear to their hearts) in a very important station among a people literally perishing for lack of knowledge, which Brother Williams' acquaintance with a language so analogous to their own, would soon enable him to impart. I have written him to that effect by the return of the Active, and I believe the American brethren have done the same.

The prospects of usefulness here are very great and encouraging; the set time to favour this people seems indeed fully come. The indications that God is about to smile upon them in a remarkable manner are daily becoming more numerous and striking. The ear of the people seems given to the words of instruction. The balance with respect to all the people of authority and influence is decidedly turned in favour of Christianity. The united and continued prayers of the American churches in behalf of this people appear to have been most signally answered in the very pleasing attention which they pay to the outward means of grace. Let British churches unite their prayers with those that arise from the western shores of the Atlantic, and I feel convinced that the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon them, in all its mighty energies and operations. His holy influence only seems wanting, in order to *another* nation's being, as it were, born in a day. May God in mercy stir up the churches, both of England and America, to united, fervent, special prayer, not only for this nation, but for every group and every solitary island upon the bosom of the vast Pacific, till they shall all become evangelized; till all shall rejoice in the pure rays of gospel truth, and bask in the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, which shall chase away the ignorance, darkness and cruelty, that now envelope their delightful abodes. I have since our arrival here, had several interviews with a native of the Marquesas (lately arrived from thence), with whom I could converse intelligibly. He informed me several Tahitians had occasionally visited them; that the chiefs and people were desirous missionaries should be sent to them, that they would not molest them. It has long been a matter of deep regret to us all, that they should remain so long in the neighbourhood of the Society Islands, unvisited, degraded by idolatry and wretchedness, without a friendly guide to conduct them to the temporal and spiritual enjoyment of all those inestimable blessings which Christianity is calculated to impart.

The frequent arrivals bring a great number of British and other seamen to this place, and I have occasional opportunities of recommending to their attention the one thing needful. I think Bibles and Testaments, and religious tracts, could be distributed with considerable advantage, and I should be very glad to receive a supply.

The letter of the king, I think, will be peculiarly gratifying to the society, not only as a specimen of his progress in writing, but also as an indication of his views and feelings with respect to Christianity. The matter and manner is entirely his own, and the translation very literal. The copies of the letters between Rev. Messrs. Thurston and Bingham and myself, will show the amicable manner in which we commenced, and, I hope, shall carry on our arduous work, and will, I trust, be gratifying to the patrons under whom we respectively labour.

I shall feel very considerable anxiety till I have the pleasure of hearing from you, though I am confident you will approve of our removal from Huahine. I hope to be favoured with communications by the earliest opportunity.* In the mean

* It is probable that in course of the

time, I remain, Rev. and dear sir, your obedient servant in the gospel,

(Signed) William Ellis.

P. S. I have occasional applications from the people to bind books for them, which I should be happy to do, but we want materials for this purpose. A standing press, cutting-press, sewing-press, and plough with boards, &c. would be very useful.

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Letter from the American Missionaries in Oahu, to Mr. Ellis.

Honoruru, Feb. 19, 1823.

Dear Brother Ellis,—Safely and seasonably arrived at this new missionary field, as the scene of your future labours in the gospel of our common Lord, you will permit us as your brethren to tender our sincere congratulations and affectionate welcome. We have with admiration witnessed some of those striking movements of Providence which led the way and brought you hither to unite your experience, your counsels, your prayers, your labours, and your influence with ours, in the great work of giving to this nation the inspired word of God, with ability to read it intelligibly, and leading them to the obedience of the truth as it is in Jesus; and we regard your arrival and settlement here as an important means of comfort and aid to us, and an accession of strength to the cause of missions here; and as one of the special tokens of God's merciful designs towards the benighted and degraded inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands.

We have long ago opened our arms and our bosoms to receive you; we now gladly hail your arrival; and with unfeigned satisfaction and unreserved approval, as your brethren and fellow labourers, embrace you as a minister of Christ, and as a missionary of his cross; and while we feel and cherish an ardent desire that we may ever be mutual helpers and comforters in the toils and trials of a missionary life, you will in all matters relative to the acquisition of the language, the translating and publishing of the scriptures, recommending important measures to the government, devising and executing plans for urging forward the intellectual and moral improvement of this nation, allow us with special confidence to rely on your experience and opinion, your counsels, and your aid. Fully persuaded as we are that no interest separate from, or opposite to, that which we seek in the sacred cause will ever be embraced in your designs, it shall be our steady aim to afford every facility in our power for the promotion of your most extended usefulness in these islands of the sea, whose salvation we would unitedly seek. "Thine are we David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse, peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers, for thy God helpeth thee."—"Lift up thine eyes and look around on the fields, for they are white already to the harvest; and he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

We are, dear Brother,
Very affectionately yours, in the labour and fellowship of the Gospel,

Hiram Bingham,
Asa Thurston.

To the Rev. Mr. Ellis, Missionary of the London Missionary Society.

P. S. We subjoin a copy of the resolution passed at a meeting of brethren at the Mission House on the 8th inst. with reference to the arrival of yourself and Mrs. Ellis— .

Mission House, Oahu, Feb. 8, 1823.

As Divine Providence seems so conspicuously to have marked the way for the entrance of Mr. and Mrs. Ellis into this missionary field, and as they have come hither with the hearty approbation and affectionate recommendation of the agents of the London Missionary Society, the Rev. Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, Esq. and of the Rev. Messrs. Orsmond, Bourne, Barff, Williams and Threlkeld, fellow labourers in the South Sea Islands, to unite with us as colleagues and fellow helpers to the truth in turning this nation to the service of Christ our common Lord, the Proprietor and Redeemer of nations. Resolved,—That we affectionately receive them as such, tendering to them heartily our Christian and missionary fellowship and aid, with the earnest hope and prayer that our union and co-operation may be affectionate and uninterrupted, until we shall be called from our labours to eternal rest. Done by the mission.

H. Bingham. D. Chamberlain.
A. Thurston. E. Loomis.

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Copy of a Letter to the Missionary Brethren, in answer to the above.

Oahu, Feb. 25, 1823.

Dear Brethren,—The warm congratulations on our arrival here, and the very affectionate welcome to these shores conveyed in your kind epistle of the 19th inst. I received with unusual emotions of pleasure and satisfaction; and should have

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next month, Mr. Ellis will receive letters notifying to him the Directors' approbation of the measure.

answered it at an earlier period, had not the immediate and more pressing duties of the mission so completely occupied my time and attention, as to put it entirely out of my power.

It is peculiarly encouraging to our minds to enter these interesting fields under such animating circumstances as those which mark our introduction to this enlarged sphere of missionary exertion, preceded and accompanied by a train of events which so strikingly display the Divine direction and approbation in our removal from the Society to the Sandwich Islands. Nor do I reckon among the least auspicious of those events, the ingenuous and benevolent manner in which we have been received by you, though coming from a different country, patronised by another society, and originally designated to a different field. The broad and Catholic principles which you have in the present instance so generously evinced, indicate an eminent degree of that disinterested and Christian liberality and benevolence so uniformly inculcated in the New Testament, and so conspicuous a feature in the signs of the times, when the principles of union and co-operation are so much better understood, and more universally acted upon, than in any preceding age of the church. Our union in the great cause which we have combined our energies to support, will be hailed by Christian philanthropists both in America and England, as an indication of the approach of that happy period, when minor distinctions among the ministers and people of God shall vanish, when they shall recognise each other as brethren, wherever they may meet, and be as "one fold under one shepherd."

Allow me also to assure you, that in complying with the solicitations of the chiefs of these islands, and your own deliberate recommendation to remove hither, I have been actuated solely by a sense of duty. I have no interests whatever to promote other than those equally dear to us both; no plans to pursue but those exclusively connected with the pure and unmixed doctrines and principles of the Bible, nor any object to accomplish, but to aid in laying the foundation of that glorious kingdom, the stability and extension of which we mutually count it our happiness to spend and be spent in advancing. I feel that it is unnecessary for me add, that it is the undisguised wish of my heart to combine my efforts with yours, and uniformly employ any facilities which my acquaintance with the language, traditions, popular character, and general habits of the Society Islanders, may furnish, for the great object of ameliorating the wretchedness of the long-neglected and degraded people around us, and conferring on them all the blessings Christianity is calculated to impart.

May our union be uninterrupted and permanent. May we ever walk in humble dependence on the great Teacher of mankind; may his Spirit pervade our hearts, and direct our steps and our every effort; and his abounding grace, crown our feeble exertions with divine and glorious success.

I am, dear Brethren,
Very affectionately yours in the bonds of the Gospel,
WM. ELLIS.

To the Rev. Messrs. Bingham and Thurston, Missionaries in the Sandwich Islands.

The Treasurer of the Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church acknowledges the receipt of the following sums for their Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J. during the month of November last, viz.

Of Rev. Mr. Nevins, per Rev. Dr. Janeway, a donation from the ladies of the First Presbyterian Sabbath School, Baltimore, for the Contingent Fund - -	$10	00
Of Rev. Samuel Tomb, collection in Salem, N. J. for do. - -	9	00
Of John D. Duffield, Esq. do. in Snowhill, Del. for do. - -	10	00
Of Samuel Bayard, Esq. do. in Princeton, N. J. for do. -	26	85
Amount received for the Contingent Fund,	55	85
Of Benjamin Strong, Esq. for the Synod of New York and New Jersey Professorship, viz. from the First Presbyterian Church in Wall street, N. Y. under the pastoral care of Rev. Mr. Whelpley, $1008. Presbyterian Church in Cedar street, Rev. Dr. Romeyn, $1246. Do. in Murray street, Rev. Wm. D. Snodgrass, formerly under Rev. Dr. Mason, $545 -	2799	00
Of Rev. Cyrus Gildersleeve, Wilkesbarre, per Mr. G. Hollenbach, his donation for the same Professorship - - -	50	00
Of Rev. Dr. E. S. Ely, in full of his subscription for the Oriental and Biblical Literature Professorship - - - -	100	00
Of Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller, his fourth half-year for do. -	25	00
And per do. from Z. Lewis, Esq. the half-yearly payment now due, for the Le Roy and Banyer Scholarships - - -	175	00
Total	$3204	85

View of Publick Affairs.

SPAIN. The French have triumphed in their invasion of Spain. Cadiz surrendered, or rather ceased to resist, on the 30th of September. The members of the Cortes have gone whithersoever they thought they could go with the most safety.—Some to Gibraltar, and many we know not where. The king, before he left Cadiz, but after he declared himself to be perfectly at liberty, published a proclamation, in which he pledged himself that a full indemnity should be granted to all, without exception, who had espoused the constitutional cause. But in about a week afterwards, on the 6th of October, he published another proclamation, proscribing all the constitutional leaders —not indeed directly sentencing them to death or banishment, but announcing that which looks to such an issue, and which he probably intended should be so understood. He also declared all the doings of the Cortes, and all his own doings, under the late constitution, to be utterly null and void. *Riego* is captured and condemned to die. *Mina* is yet in arms: and the vascillating *Ballasteros*, it is said, hesitates whether to surrender his army and himself, or yet to resist. A part of the French army has embarked at Cadiz, on its return home. The Duke *D'Angouleme* is returning by land.—Some accounts say he is going to Catalonia, to finish the war in that quarter. The King of Spain, when last heard from, was indulging his superstitious devotions in Seville. It appears that he has re-established the inquisition. In the mean time, nothing, it would seem, can exceed the distraction which reigns throughout his unhappy kingdom; over which it is questionable whether he will be able much longer to exercise any authority. But we cannot at present indulge in speculations or conjectures.—Indeed we are tired of speculating, in regard to a people so degraded and debased as the mass of the Spanish nation appear to us to be. We only rest in the opinion, which we have repeatedly expressed, that they are suffering severely under the scourge of heaven.

PORTUGAL. It is said that the King of Portugal, although exercising uncontrolled power, does not feel safe in his own capital; the inhabitants of which are represented as very generally in favour of the late constitution. It appears, however, that the ruling authorities both of Portugal and Spain, with the stipulated assistance of a French force as an auxiliary, are determined on an attempt to regain their possessions in South America. If this attempt should be seriously made, our Southern neighbours are not likely to see a speedy end to their troubles; a deluge of human blood will flow, and probably a general war in Europe be the consequence. Nor is it improbable that our own country will be involved. We are certainly not regarded with a favourable eye by any of the lovers of despotick rule. They think, and with less error than often marks their opinions, that our revolution and existing government are to be regarded as the source and vital spring of that spirit of liberty in Europe which has caused them so much trouble, which of all earthly things they most hate and most desire utterly to extinguish.

FRANCE is intoxicated with the success of the French arms in Spain. From the city of Paris, to the smallest country towns in the kingdom, the late successes are celebrated by fetes, and by every expression of popular joy and exultation. These successes are no doubt a healing balm to the wounded national pride, occasioned by the defeat of the armies under Bonaparte, and the subjugation of the country by a foreign military force. The governmental authorities, at the same time, carefully cherish this exultation, because it serves to strengthen their own sway, and to repress the opposition of the liberals who warmly protested against the invasion of Spain. It does indeed seem as if not only in France, but throughout continental Europe, the cause of freedom is for the present effectually put down, and that absolute monarchical sway completely possesses the ascendant.

GREAT BRITAIN. The British parliament has not yet met. But it appears that commissioners have heen appointed and sent to the newly erected governments in South America. Inquiries have already been made by Spain, and Portugal, and France, as to the design of these appointments; and a soothing answer is said to have been returned. But Britain cannot but wish the independence of these new states, as affording a most important opening for her commercial speculations and enterprise. She probably will not permit France, or Russia, or Austria, to aid in their subjugation; and if not, their subjugation will not we think be effected. But it is not at all im-

probable, that the conflicting views and wishes of all the parties concerned, may bring on that general European war to which we have already alluded. It is said that active operations are already going on in the British shipyards, to have their navy in readiness for immediate service.

Rome.—A new Pope was elected at Rome on the 27th of September, and his coronation took place on the 5th of October. He was the Cardinal *Annibal, Della Genga,* an Italian. He was born at Genga, August 2d, 1760; and was the first cardinal named by the late Pope, after the re-establishment of his authority by Napoleon. The present Pope has taken the title of Leo XII.

The Greeks.—The cause of the Greeks is prosperous far beyond all our anticipations, and we believe as much beyond their own. Up to the date of the last accounts, they had been much more successful in the last campaign than in any other; and with much less bloodshed and all the other distressing concomitants of war. The Turkish invasion appears to have been conducted with very little military or naval skill; and the plague has destroyed many of their sailors and soldiers, and embarrassed and enfeebled all their operations. A lively interest begins to be taken in the cause of the Greeks, not only in England but in some parts of continental Europe, as well as in this country. Our hope of its success is greatly increased—it almost rises to confidence. In taking a view of the political state of Europe, Britain and Greece strike us like those verdant spots of which travellers tell us in the Arabian deserts.

Russia and Turkey are said to have accommodated their differences peacefully, under the mediation of the British ambassador, Lord Strangford. We hope that the parties will not find leisure and inclination to do mischief to others, now that they have terminated the dispute which has so long subsisted between themselves.

Southern America.—The Colombian Republick has driven the Spanish troops from Porto Cabello, and is now almost entirely cleared of its late invaders.—It is probable, however, that a very serious conflict awaits the republicans, from a new and formidable invasion from Spain and France. Mexico has anticipated the mother country in a declaration of war. It is marked, notwithstanding, by an unusual degree of liberality, in allowing time for the friends of Old Spain to leave the country and to dispose of their property. The Brazils remain *in statu quo.* But it appears that they too are to look for an invasion from Europe. On the western coast of South America the republicans appear to be rapidly expelling or subduing the royalists.

The United States.—The great political topick which now occupies the attention of our countrymen is the choice of the next President. We have only to say, in regard to this, that we think that the friends of religion in the United States ought earnestly to pray that the choice of a chief magistrate may fall on one who will rule in the fear of God, and recommend piety and good morals by his own example; and that, with their prayers, they should use all lawful and proper endeavours that such a choice may be effected. Much expectation is excited in regard to the contents of the next presidential communication to Congress, which is now impatiently looked for. Congress agreeably to the constitution meet on the first of the present month.—The coming session will be one of great interest for our country. Let us constantly beseech of Him who holds the destinies of nations in his hands, that all the councils of *our* nation may be enlightened by his wisdom, conducted in his fear, and crowned with his blessing.

Since the above was in type, we have seen and carefully perused the president's message to congress. It is of unusual length; and, in our judgment, is not surpassed in a lucid, temperate, and dignified exhibition of the various interests and concerns of the nation, by any composition of the kind which we have heretofore read. Yet sorely did it disappoint and grieve us, to find that from beginning to end there was no recognition of our dependance on God, or of our indebtedness to Him for the unparalleled prosperity and happiness of our country. We will give the last three sentences of the message, and add in brackets what we humbly conceive would greatly enhance its value, in the estimation of the pious part, at least, of our president's constituents—"To what then do we owe these blessings? It is known to all, that we derive them [under the divine benediction] from the excellence of our institutions. Ought we not then to adopt every measure which may be necessary to perpetuate them [be thankful to Almighty God that he has permitted and enabled us to establish them, and manifest our gratitude for his distinguishing favours, by obedience to his laws and an humble reliance on his future protection and care?]

TO THE PATRONS OF THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

The editor of the Christian Advocate informs its patrons, that he has now become the sole proprietor of that work; and that all the profit or loss attending it, will henceforth be exclusively his own; excepting the tithe of gain,—if gain there shall be—which will remain sacredly appropriated to the charities of the church.

From the present number of subscribers, the work will but barely defray the expense of publication. The editor, therefore, earnestly requests its friends to use their influence and agency to give it a wider circulation. Surely the Presbyterian church in the United States is able, and ought to be willing, to support one religious journal, in which the doctrines which she professes are explained and defended, the proceedings of her supreme judicature fully detailed, her institutions advocated, information relative to all her important interests constantly and seasonably communicated, and a tenth of its profits consecrated to her charities. Of such a publication, is it too much to say that *no other* ought to be permitted, by the members of this church, to take the place or prevent the reception.

It is not for the editor to pronounce on the intrinsick merit of a work conducted by himself. He may however be allowed to say, that in place of this address there would have been a notice of the resignation of his editorial labours, if those labours had not received the voluntary and animating approbation of men whose opinion both he and the publick are accustomed to respect. Supported by this opinion, and exceedingly desirous that the church to which he belongs and to which he is ardently attached, should sustain a reputable religious miscellany, he is determined to persevere, in opposition to much that is calculated to dishearten. He has not received, and never expects to receive, any pecuniary emolument whatever, for his laborious occupation through the whole of the past year; and what is far more to be regretted, the design of the work is in a great measure defeated, and its usefulness much circumscribed, by its very limited circulation. He is resolved notwithstanding, to improve the contents of this publication to the utmost of his power, that it may increase its claims to the encouragement on which its continuance must depend; and if it shall at last expire for the want of patronage, he will at least have the satisfaction to reflect, that in the evening of a life devoted to the church of Christ, he still earnestly endeavoured to render it an important service, although his best efforts were unsuccessful.

All the mercantile concerns of the Christian Advocate will *hereafter* be conducted by the editor's son. Letters relative to subscriptions, accounts, remittances, &c. should therefore be directed, *post paid*, to Jacob Green, Esq., No. 190, Pine street, Philadelphia—communications for the work, to the editor himself, at the same place. Mr. E. Littell, No. 88 Chestnut street, is still the publisher of the Advocate; and to him all remittances for the *past year*, and all communications relative to the concern *hitherto*, are to be directed.—An index to the volume which is closed by the present number, will be sent to subscribers, with the number for the coming month.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

TRINITARIAN No. II., shall appear in our next. U. and *A Discussion on Rom.* i. 28, are under consideration.

SEP 17 1919